

Community Covenant Church



Profile

7018 Sydenstricker Road
Springfield, VA 22152

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About Us: At a Glance

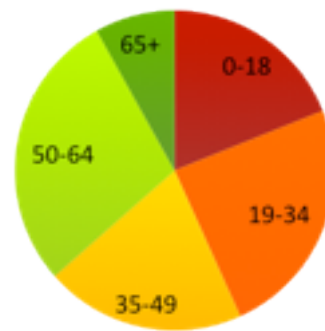
Community Covenant Church
7018 Sydenstricker Road
Springfield, VA 22152-3216
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East Coast Conference
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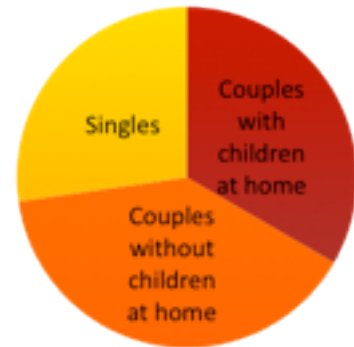
Church Membership (2009-10 Covenant Yearbook): 86
Church Attendance (2009-10 Covenant Yearbook): 53
Church Governance: Council

Search Committee Co-chairs:
Claire Bentley David Reitman
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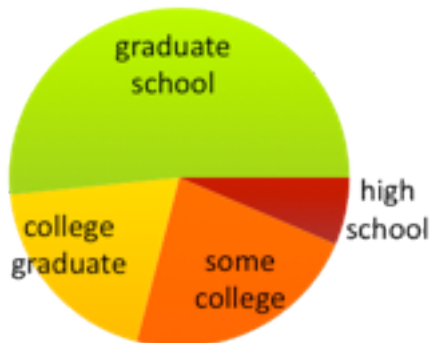
Age Distribution



Household composition



Education Level (survey)



Occupation Distribution (survey)



About Us:

Our Vision

Mission Statement

Our mission as a congregation is calling people from this community and around the world into communion with Christ. Our communion with him and with each other grows as we enter into the promises and challenges that a covenant with Christ includes.

Theological Foundation

Like our denomination, Community Covenant Church is evangelical, but not exclusive; biblical, but not doctrinaire; traditional, but not rigid; and congregational, but not independent. We affirm the principles of the Covenant Affirmations. (In fact, we studied them in depth in the adult Sunday School class in 2008.) Most significantly, we see ourselves as Bible-based, accepting the Scriptures as the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct.

Core Values

Family-Friendly

We see ourselves as family-friendly and family-centered. We currently offer Sunday School classes for toddlers and two's, preschoolers and kindergartners, teenagers and young adults, and adults. Our elementary class and youth group are active when we have students of the appropriate age. Junior Jamboree, a children's church experience, is held at least twice a month. The nursery is staffed during worship. We host multiple ongoing and short-term Bible study groups.

Ministry Target Population

We are aware that our region is one of short-term residents. We prepare our members and regular attenders for service elsewhere, when the military, federal government, or high-tech jobs call them away. Financially and in prayer, we support former members in mission or as they go through serious illness. We celebrate their achievements in publishing and other areas.

Community Partnerships

We are available to the community. Peniel Presbyterian Church, an ethnically Korean congregation, shares our sanctuary, including for Sunday afternoon services. Our tenants include numerous Boy and Girl Scout troops. We are best-known as the meeting place for Troop 1853, the largest Boy Scout troop in Virginia.

Called and Gifted

In the past our church has had male pastors. However, we recognize how valuable women are to our church's ministry and lay leadership. Historically, it has been women who have been in charge of children's ministries and administration. Our church is open to considering the right candidate, whether that person is male or female.



About Us:

Our History

On March 5, 1972, Community Covenant Church was organized in Springfield, Virginia, by a core group that included founding pastor Bruce Lake. We began to build communion with Christ and with each other in a Fairfax County whose population was doubling every decade but which remained 93.2% Caucasian. By our 35th anniversary in 2007, the county's population had more than doubled again, from 454,000 to 1,015,000. Its diversity has exploded, with the county now 58.2% non-Hispanic white, 9.2% African-American, 15.8% Asian, and 14.1% Hispanic. Median household income has grown from \$14,854 to \$88,133 per year, although to meet basic needs, a family of four requires an annual income of \$66,504.

Our weekly attendance has hovered around 45 for the past decade. Proportionately, we have almost always been about half lifetime Covenanters and about half "refugees" from other denominations. Our congregation reflects the ethnic diversity of our community. While a few families have been with us for decades, many of our members serve in the military or work for the State Department. Thus, they come to and go from the Washington, DC, region every few years.

Despite our transient nature, our congregation moved relatively quickly from meeting in a school to constructing its own building, albeit one that resembles the design of Pizza Hut restaurants in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1984, we

expanded the building by adding a basement with a nursery, 2 classrooms, 2 restrooms, and open meeting space. In 1997, we entered into partnership with the Beautiful Church (now Peniel Presbyterian Church). This congregation's growth challenged us to rethink the structure of our sanctuary and offices. Around 1999, we refinanced our mortgage and opened up the upstairs level in such a way that we cannot imagine why we tolerated the earlier configuration for so long.

We did much of the work ourselves, which brought together new friendships. For example, the firefighter who first set foot in our sanctuary when we managed to set it on fire during worship one Sunday labored alongside the long-time member who perhaps made the biggest sacrifice of us all during the renovation when he broke his arm while painting the vaulted ceiling.

Yet, the physical improvements enhanced the life of our church so much that we continued on to spruce up the downstairs level, just in time for celebrating our 30th anniversary on April 13-14, 2002. Many former pastors and members returned for a pizza dinner (catered by Pizza Hut, of course) and participate in a Brown Hymnal Sing led by Bob Dvorak.

Some major events in our recent history are highlighted on the next page.

Brother, Can You Spare a Grist Mill?

One of our families, Badassa and Almaz Tobo and Betelihem and Lidiya, emigrated from Ethiopia in the late 1990s. Badassa's family leads the church in his hometown, Hedde Bukko. In 2005, Badassa shared with us his brother's desire to provide a new grist mill for the town so that the residents did not have to walk miles to grind grain and his own determination to fulfill this dream. After much prayer and deliberation, we chose this project as our Above and Beyond offering for the summer of 2006. Even though the \$15,000 price tag was equivalent to 15% of our annual budget, we raised the funds! It was a great time of bringing together current and former members with our tenant groups to meet a common goal.



Revitalization or Bust!

On February 9, 2008, 11 members attended the Veritas Revitalization Workshop with Dr. John Wenrich in Livingston, NJ. It was a productive day of honestly evaluating our strengths and weaknesses, and we brought home some of the skills through several weeks of prayer for revitalization, the formulation of a behavioral covenant, several weeks of adult Sunday School lessons on the assessment tools, and the inclusion of "balcony space" in the church Council agenda for the next year.

Calling All (Preschooler) Heroes

Nearly a decade elapsed between our last two sessions of Vacation Bible School, but when we hold VBS, we can put together a doozy! In August 2008, almost everyone in the congregation played a role in the curriculum utilizing the VeggieTales movie, "The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything." Over 20 neighborhood children, aged 3-5, took part in a week of lessons, food, and fun.



Time for Transition

We have been fortunate in having very little pastoral turnover in our 38-year history. John and Sandy Benson arrived in the spring of 1997. Although we knew they planned our congregation to be the last stop in John's career, it was still unsettling when he announced in October 2009 that they would be retiring to Connecticut at the end of June 2010. While this is a time of excitement for us as we look forward to bringing in fresh faces to challenge us to walk with Christ in new ways, it is also a time of wistful reflection, as we remember all of the memories we have made in the past 13 years.

About Us:

Survey Results

Our Strengths

We recently surveyed our congregation to find out what people who attend CCC consider to be the strengths of the church. Respondents consistently referred to the church as a friendly and loving family, and one where people give generously of themselves (“I feel I could call anyone in the church directory for any kind of help and not feel funny about it.”)

Other strengths mentioned in the survey include:

- ✧ Enthusiasm for children’s ministry
- ✧ A unified body from diverse backgrounds
- ✧ Biblically sound and committed to Christ
- ✧ A strong, challenging Sunday school program
- ✧ “Welcoming to EVERYONE!”
- ✧ Flexibility with regard to worship styles



Our Priorities

The survey results also indicated that we look to pastors primarily for preaching and Bible knowledge. Additionally, we highly value evangelism, pastoral care, teaching, counseling, and leading in worship services, and we seek revitalization.

Our congregation tends to desire balance in worship styles, with many members and friends appreciating an eclectic mix of hymns, worship songs, liturgy, sermon series, and artistic expression. We are open to changing our current habits, which include following the lectionary cycle and using the fourfold worship pattern. Further numerical data from the survey appears on the following page.

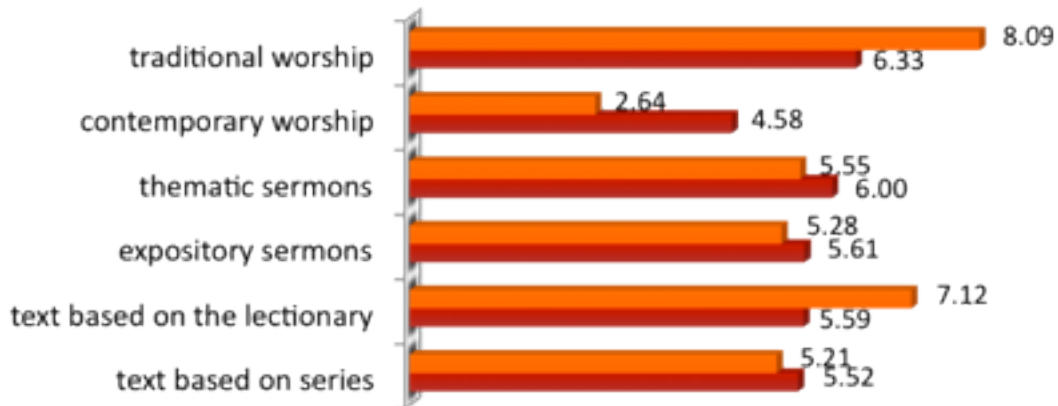
We welcome all who confess with their lips that Jesus is Lord and who believe in their hearts that God raised them from the dead to join in the sacrament of Holy Communion. Everyone is invited to come forward to receive the bread and the cup, with the youngest children offered grapes.

The Covenant logo is highlighted in the stained glass window that adorns our sanctuary, and it is explained in our bulletin every Sunday.

These are average scores, based on a scale from 1 to 10, in which 1 represents the least descriptive of the church and 10 represents the most descriptive of the church.

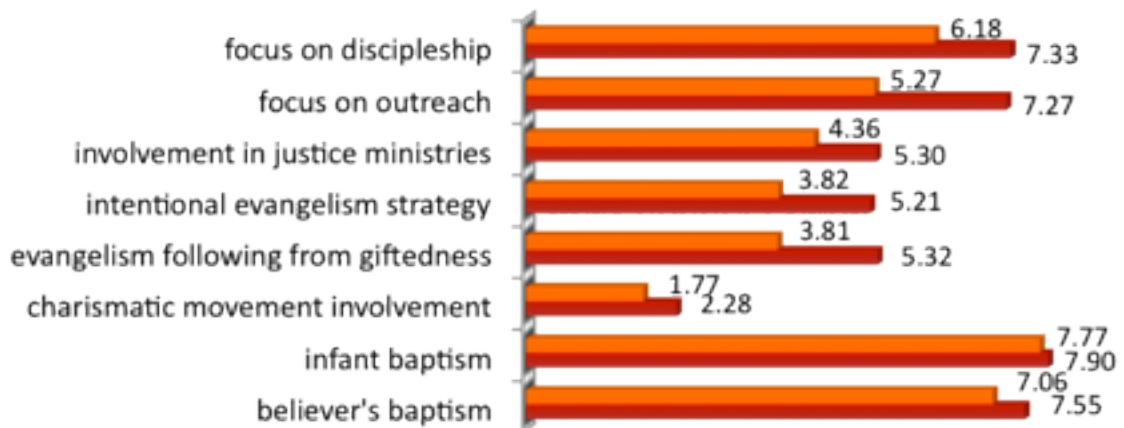
Worship Style Preferences

Current Desired



Ministerial Emphasis

Current Desired



Our Community: At a Glance

We are located in Fairfax County in northern Virginia outside of Washington, DC. Fairfax is one of the five wealthiest counties in the USA. It has a highly-rated public school system which draws families to the area. West Springfield is a suburban community with a population of 19,554 with the following characteristics (taken from <http://factfinder.census.gov>, 2006-2008 survey):

- ✧ Median age is 41
- ✧ 11.3 % of the population is 65 years old and older
- ✧ Average family size is 3
- ✧ Foreign born immigrants make up 25% of the population, while 31% report speaking a language other than English at home
- ✧ 61% hold a Bachelor's degree or higher
- ✧ Median household income is \$105,076
- ✧ Families below poverty level is 3.1%
- ✧ Racial makeup is 64.9% white, 8.2 % African American, 15.2% Asian, 12.6% Hispanic
- ✧ 29% of the civilian workforce is in the public sector
- ✧ 22% are in professional/scientific area
- ✧ 19% are in education/health care

In addition, there are many military families due to the close proximity of Fort Belvoir and the Pentagon. This gives transience to our neighborhoods as families are reassigned. The neighborhoods are made up of mostly single-family homes with some townhouses and apartments.

The trends of this community are typical of a growing suburban area, with increasing ethnic and racial diversity and with more government and military families, due to additional government agencies and expansion of Fort Belvoir. At the same time, there are limited resources for accommodating increased traffic congestion and the demands higher populations put on schools, public facilities and services. Many people are in high stress positions with family needs becoming more complicated. The pace of life is fast. The cost of living is high. And many families do not have extended family members to support them or to help out in emergencies. The downturn in the economy is seen in housing prices declining and tightening availability of jobs, especially for immigrant populations and unskilled laborers.

Our Community: Amenities

- Historical Sites, including:
 - Old Town Alexandria
 - Mount Vernon
 - See also www.fxva.com/
- Nearby Parks and Hidden Pond Nature Center
- South Run Community Recreation Center
- George Mason University
 - Patriot Center
- Pohick and Richard Byrd Public Libraries
- 4 Major Food Stores Within 3-7 Minutes
- INOVA Healthplex Medical Center
- Easy Access to I-95 and Fairfax County Parkway
- Numerous Local “Big Box” Centers and Regional Shopping Malls
- Local Restaurants as well as National Sit-Down, Fast Food, and Coffee Chains



Our Community: Ministry Opportunities & Challenges

Problem Areas in the Wider Community

- Language barriers between immigrants and the rest of the community, as well as issues integrating immigrants into the community
- A lack of religious focus, especially with people trying to strike a balance between church and their career in an increasingly stressful work world
- A need to feed the poor
- A need for support for broken families as well as families who are uprooted into our community and are separated from extended family

Our Church & the Community

- Our church participates in a number of community responsibilities through activities, programs, and other actions. One primary activity that we participate in every year is the Angel Tree program, through which we provide Christmas gifts to children who have a parent in prison. Other programs that we participate in include Crop Walk, which helps raise funds for starving people in other countries, and Rolling Bandages, which we participate in with Church of the Redeemer Evangelical Covenant Church in Bowie, MD. We also do a number of things to help feed the hungry, such as donating food to ECHO and Rising Hope. Another major thing that we do to aid the community is to provide space to other groups such as the Peniel Presbyterian Church and Boy Scout Troop 1853.



Our Community: Relationships With Other Churches

Our church's relationship with the other churches in the community has, to this point, been managed primarily by the pastor, with a few exceptions.

We have a very good working relationship with the Korean congregation (Peniel Presbyterian Church) that uses our building for their services. We have a yearly joint service followed by a meal, featuring kimchi. The service is typically led by either our pastor, or PPC's pastor, with translations provided. In the past we have talked about making this a closer relationship, including more joint services and potentially joint Bible studies/Sunday School classes.

We participate in joint services with other churches in the community, as coordinated by the pastor. In particular, we have joint Thanksgiving and Easter sunrise services with nearby Sydenstricker United Methodist

Church. Our Women Ministries work with other Covenant churches for bandage rolling and women's retreats. Through the organizational skills of a few key church members, we make significant contributions to local shelters and food banks, and participate in the CROP walk.

The pastor is involved with Bible studies made up of local pastors. This seems to ebb and flow as pastors come and go; most recently, he is involved in an ecumenical Bible study with Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, and Christian Reformed participants, as well as our Covenant minister.

We do have the opportunity to work with new Covenant churches in our district. Most recently, the Riverside Covenant Church was planted in Washington, DC, providing an opening for us to develop a close relationship with them.



Our Partners

Tenants & Guest Groups

Our church building is used in numerous ways by the community. The church is home to various tenant groups such as Peniel Presbyterian Church, a Boy Scout Troop (largest troop in the area), and Girl Scout and Brownies troops. The church is also used for various counseling/health service clinics, a scrapbooking class, Stampin' Up, congregational meetings, and occasional other groups.



Community Covenant Church

East Coast Conference & the Denomination

Our pastor has been very involved in conference activities, serving on the East Coast Conference Executive Board, and attending conference and Midwinter denomination meetings. Members have also served on conference boards and attending the conference annual meeting.

Our church makes an effort to be involved in denominational ministry activities as much as possible. We follow the denominational year in special emphases (Week of Prayer, One Step Closer, etc.). Our women are involved in the East Coast Conference women's ministries and typically send a large delegation (relative to our church size) to the women's retreats and to Triennial. Our youth group goes to CHIC, and some families camp at Pilgrim Pines. However, our attendance at many events has gone down in the past 5 years. We last sent representatives to the Annual Meeting in 2007.

At the urging of our pastor, many of us attended the Veritas workshop sponsored by the denomination. This has led to some increased conference involvement.

In recent years, we made a conscious decision to increase our financial commitment to the conference, the denomination, and to World Missions. We also participate in the World Relief Bank ministry.

Our Ministries:

Major Groups

Church Council

- Purpose: To conduct the business of the church
- Number of members: 10 (Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Properties Chair, Worship Chair, Christian Formation Chair, Outreach Chair, Fellowship Chair)
- Frequency of meetings: Constitutionally, once per month
- Leadership role: Pastor is ex-officio member; typically provides day-to-day information and guidance and maintains institutional memory

Women's Bible Study

- Purpose: To read the Bible, pray, and discuss different things
- Number of members: 9
- Frequency of meetings: Once per week
- Leadership role: Laity take primary initiative and responsibility

Youth Group (when applicable)

- Purpose: To allow for the youth to have fun and experience spiritual growth
- Number of members: N/A
- Frequency of meetings: Once per week
- Leadership role: Laity take primary initiative and responsibility

Covenant Crafters

- Purpose: To work on various crafts and have fun
- Number of members: 7
- Frequency of meetings: Once per month
- Leadership role: Laity take primary initiative and responsibility

Books and Culture Discussion Group

- Purpose: To read and discuss books that are of interest to the Christian community, as well as other books/movies
- Number of members: 12
- Frequency of meetings: Once per month
- Leadership role: Laity take primary initiative and responsibility

Seasonal Small Groups

- Purpose: To pray, read the Bible, and discuss various things in a small group setting
- Number of members: about 20(distributed over about 3 groups)
- Frequency of meetings: Once per week
- Leadership role: Laity take primary initiative and responsibility

Our Ministries:

Christian Formation

- Sunday School for all ages
 - The adult class maintains a blog : covenantchurchva.blogspot.com
- Nursery
- Two Women's Bible studies
- Confirmation
- Youth group
- Membership classes
- Occasional small groups
- Vacation Bible School



Pastoral Expectations

Our congregation has many people who love to serve. We have many individuals who take Christian formation and education very seriously, but we need help in a few key, non-educational areas.

Specifically, the pastor will need to play an active leadership role by giving overall direction and guidance to the lay leaders who teach Sunday school classes and Bible studies. In addition, the pastor will teach Confirmation and lead Bible studies.



Our Ministries:

Outreach

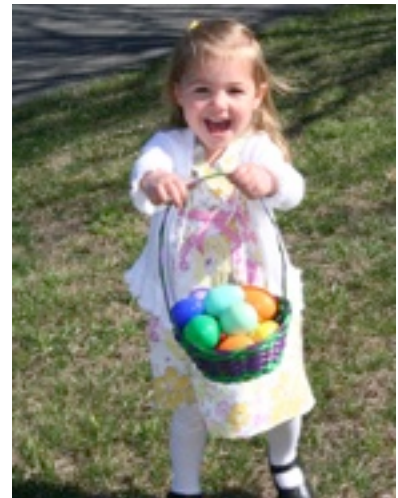


- ECHO and Rising Hope food pantry donations
- Angel Tree Christmas gifts for prisoners' children
- Books and Culture discussion group
- Community women's Bible study
- Bandage rolling for Congo
- Thanksgiving baskets
- CROP Walk
- Christmas caroling in the neighborhood
- Rummage sales

Our Ministries: Fellowship

Community is part of our name, and it is central to our experience as a church. As a small church, we make the most of the gifts and talents of all those who fellowship with us; new people are quickly integrated into the life and ministry of the church. Aside from ministry and service, we have a variety of activities and fellowship events over the course of the year. These include:

- ✧ Pot-luck meals
- ✧ Annual church picnic
- ✧ Seasonal small groups (generally during Lent and over the summer)
- ✧ Joint services and meals with the Peniel Church
- ✧ Christmas dinner, Easter brunch
- ✧ Talent / No-talent night
- ✧ Coffee hour (between Sunday school and the worship service)
- ✧ Covenant Crafters
- ✧ Books and Culture discussion group
- ✧ Vacation Bible School
- ✧ Above and beyond projects (missions, fund-raising)



Our Material Assets:

Finances

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Income	\$128,603	\$125,708	\$156,357	\$122,917	\$132,446
Operating Expenses	\$117,266	\$111,894	\$112,664	\$118,182	\$111,667
Loan Payments	\$9,515	\$10,043	\$10,571	\$10,431	\$10,107
Denominational Giving	\$910	\$1,200	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$3,000
Conference Giving	\$1,000	\$1,200	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$3,000
Other Giving	\$12,172	\$23,716	\$19,383	\$10,561	\$9,913

Present Savings: \$30,000

Present Investments: \$0

We have no current capital fund drive or building fund.

In addition to the \$3,000 tithes to the denomination and to the conference listed above, in 2009 we spent \$1,000 on Sunday School expenses (adult and youth) and budgeted \$350 in giving to Local Ministries. We also support local food banks and shelters through non-cash donations.

Our Material Assets:

Physical Property

The Community Covenant Church is a 2 story, 2800-square-foot building that sits on a nicely landscaped 2 ½ acres in West Springfield, VA. The land includes a parking area for 45 cars. Additional street parking is available.

The second floor sanctuary seats up to 100 persons comfortably and is accessible from the road on one side, giving easy access for individuals with physical limitations. The sanctuary includes a single pulpit, an organ and a baby grand piano. Also on the second floor are the pastor's office, the church office, and the kitchen.

The first floor is our Sunday School space, which also serves as our church potluck dining area and meeting area. The Nursery and the 2 Sunday School classrooms are used almost every Sunday.

The outside area is divided into two main areas. We have a wonderful wooded area that includes an outdoor sanctuary for spring and summer worship services. Over recent years, numerous Eagle Scout projects have replaced steps leading out from the sanctuary and constructed benches, picnic tables, and a picnic deck in the grassy section near the church. The church uses these periodically for planned picnics and for impromptu get-togethers.

The church owns a very nice parsonage in one of the nearby neighborhoods.

The parsonage is a 4 bedroom, 2 ½ bath house with a great deck and mature trees. The church is blessed to have a large parsonage in an area that has seen a great rise in property values over the past decade, even considering the current economic times.

The Parsonage is located at:
6624 Reynard Drive
Springfield, VA 22152



Our Compensation

Community Covenant Church provides a compensation package that is competitive with other suburban churches and that depends on the individual's qualifications and background. We typically provide annual salary increases in line with the cost-of-living increases calculated for federal employees in the Washington, DC, area.

Actual compensation will depend on the individual's salary history and experience. Moving and travel expenses will be discussed with the successful candidate.

In addition:

- ✧ We contribute to the Pension Plan according to the Rules for the Ordered Ministry.
- ✧ We provide the group insurance program of The Evangelical Covenant Church.
- ✧ We provide a 403(b) plan for retirement savings.

We reimburse the following ministry expenses, subject to annual review:

- ✧ Ministry Mileage
- ✧ Continuing Education
- ✧ Ministry Resources

We grant an annual paid vacation of 4 weeks and annual study/conference/speaking leave to be determined.

We reimburse for expenses incurred in attending the following conferences, as well as other official meetings at which your attendance may be required:

- ✧ Covenant Annual Meeting
- ✧ Midwinter Conference
- ✧ Regional Conference Annual Meeting
- ✧ Ministers' Retreat
- ✧ Leave of absence due to family needs (Family Leave Policy): When applicable

We provide a swim club membership.

Moving Forward: The Bottom Line

Community Covenant Church is the kind of place where, one minute, the youth wow newcomers by sitting on the front row, engaged in the sermon or even leading the service. The next, they are the godly men and women who grew up as friends, dated in college, and married afterwards.

It's the kind of place where real life happens: people are affected by addiction, saints reach the end of their earthly days, we hear the "c-word" at a routine checkup. Yet, with God's help, we muddle through together.

It's the kind of place where our proximity to Washington, DC, shapes but does not define us. Our graduate degrees indicate an engagement with national and local political and social issues, but our work in the federal government and military dissuades us from partisanship. Rather, we take advantage of the Covenant tradition to agree to disagree on nonessentials—meaning that the wide range of political inclinations found here belies our small congregation size. Overall, we are countercultural for this region, in that what we do is not who we are.

As Community Covenant Church moves beyond the retirement of our current pastor, we hope to use this time of change as an opportunity to energize our mission and ministry to our community. Among our goals are to:

- ✧ Manage a smooth transition to a new pastor.
- ✧ Continue the spiritual nurturing fostered by our previous pastor so that we keep growing in Christ.
- ✧ Continue the process of revitalization. The church has already started down this road through the Veritas workshop, and we intend to continue to put those precepts into practice.
- ✧ Develop a renewed commitment to outreach.
- ✧ Stimulate sufficient growth in human and financial resources within the church, so that we can stabilize and expand the ministries we provide to those who attend the church.
- ✧ Minister more visibly and effectively to the multi-ethnic, mixed income, intergenerational community in which we are situated.
- ✧ Resolve logistical problems due to geography that arise in scheduling weekday meetings and services. We have members who do not live close to the church or who lack their own transportation and face commutes of 10 to 30 miles that can take up to 2 hours during a weekday rush hour.

Contact Us

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