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Weekly Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church - September 15, 2021

Laurie Johnson, Office Manager & Newsletter Editor



**Covenant is an accepting, welcoming community
sharing the glory of God's love with all.**

New website format with livestreaming, interaction and tons of new features
will be live next weekend! Please be on the lookout!

From our pastor

Then Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes one of these children in my name welcomes me." Mark 9:37a

Sometimes the lectionary text for a given week is uncannily appropriate. This Sunday, we get to hear Jesus say these words to his disciples, on the same day we will be welcoming all generations to worship at 10am in the sanctuary. How perfect is that? To welcome children is to welcome Jesus himself. To make our service more welcoming to children, we have removed our two front pews to create designated children's worship areas. Erin has created worship toolkits that will give young people concrete ways to participate in the service. Our bulletins will also have graphics indicating what tool a child can utilize with a given portion of the service. We will continue to experiment more as we go along, but I am thrilled to bring our congregation together for worship this Sunday at 10am. I hope to see you there!

Also, starting this Sunday at 9am, Christian Education will resume for all ages. From young to old, we will have different classes for you to attend. I will be teaching "Presbyterian 101," a 6-week introductory class to what it means to be Presbyterian. It's perfect for those considering membership at Covenant, and for anyone who would like a refresher on the basics of our faith. This class will take place in the Lounge.

Finally, I'm thrilled to announce that **this Sunday we will be debuting a newly updated church website!** We are keeping the same web address: <https://www.covenantpcusa.org>. The updated site will have a cleaner, less text focused design. Video of our services will be streamed through the website, not just on Facebook and YouTube. We will have a video archive, and all kinds of new ways to connect with each other. There will be more to announce about the website in the weeks to come, but I think you will love what you see.

One Struggle to Love,

Rev. Joel A. Esala

COVENANT'S SUNDAY 10:00 a.m. INDOOR, IN-PERSON WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.



COVENANT'S SUNDAY 10:00 a.m. VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICE

FACEBOOK for Sunday, 10:00 a.m.

services: <https://www.facebook.com/covenantpcusa/>

Look for the most current video, labeled "PREMIERE: Current Date".

YOUTUBE for Sunday, 10:00 a.m. services: <https://www.youtube.com/user/covenantpcusa>

Look for the most current video, labeled "PREMIERE: Current Date"

For past services, special music, and other church video content, visit our main YouTube page: [Covenant Service Archive](#).

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL AGES!

Christian Education will resume Sunday, Sept. 19th at 9:00 a.m. For adults, there will be one class called Presbyterian 101. This will be a 6-week introductory class in the Lounge to what it means to be Presbyterian.

POEM BY CPC MEMBER SARAH STAFF

God's Home

The pastor left,
And took her gift of love and laughter,
Her gift of joy and song.
We thought we lost our Home!
And then another left,
Who took her gift of faith and all consuming passion,
Her gift of spiritual uplifting.
We were sure we lost our Home!
And in the midst of this,
The Covid came into our fragile door,
And dealt another blow,
It closed our Home!
We spent a year or so,
With interim pastors meant to hold us close,
But the doors were locked.
We could not find our Home!
So we were lost and angry,
Though Session tried so hard to keep us close,
We found that virtual worship didn't fit.
And people left that could not find their Home!
Then people did remember times of joy,
And hope began to reach inside those doors,
Reminding 'twas a building not the Church.
And in our hearts we started to come Home!

*A pastor heard our hopeful, faithful call,
He came though virtual was still real,
And reminded us the church was God, with all of us.
And used his voice to lead us toward our Home!
The doors began to open,
The parking lot became our joyous place,
And gradually the doors will let us see the truth.
That we, not sacred walls that lock, are God's real Home!*

DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

As we watch the situation unfolding in Afghanistan and pray for the men, women and children of that country, please consider donating to [CRIS](#) (Community Refugee & Immigration Services). It is an independent non-profit organization that serves the refugee and immigrant populations of Central Ohio. CRIS is the Church World Service Ohio affiliate designated to provide refugee resettlement services.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is mobilized and already delivering immediate aid to those impacted by Hurricane Ida. The needs of those impacted are changing daily because of lack of access to power, refrigeration, water and housing. Please consider donating to: [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#) <info@info.pcusa.org>

Honoring our "Over-80" Members

Nurture And Outreach has embarked on a new project to honor Covenants "Over-80" members, or as we are calling them "Super Seniors." Elders, Deacons, and members of the Nurture and Outreach Commission will be approaching Super Seniors by phone, email, or in person, and four or five of them will be highlighted each week in the church newsletter. While a long list of questions has been compiled to help draw interesting and perhaps fun information about these seniors, each article will contain maybe four short answers or stories that they would like to let Covenant members know about them. We know that spending time with our Super Seniors can be fun, fascinating, and educational, so we hope they will look forward to being contacted and, as for the church congregation, we hope you will look forward to and enjoy learning about our awesome Super Seniors. Any questions, please contact Nan Davidson by sending an email to lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org.

SPIRITUAL CINEMA

Wednesday, 9/29, we will gather in the Lounge, wearing masks, at 6:30 pm to watch [Just Mercy](#), a 2019 biographical legal drama. World-renowned civil rights defense attorney Bryan Stevenson works to free a wrongly condemned death row prisoner. We will stay for a short time after the film to share the experience. Come join us.

WELCOME!

To Our Parents of Young Children:

We love the sound of kids in our service! God made kids wiggly and curious, and we celebrate that here. Here are some ideas to keep them engaged:

Sit Close: Consider sitting up front where it's easier for kids to see. You are welcome to join other kiddos in our Faithful Families areas up front and in the narthex.

Explain: Kids are curious! Quietly explain what is happening in the service.

Participate: Kids learn by mimicking what you do. So, sing, pray, respond, etc. – kids will follow your lead!

Wander: It's OK to move around. Sometimes kids need a chance to move their bodies.

Need to leave? No problem, but please come back! Sometimes kids just need a break.

Ask: Questions or need help? Just ask our ushers.

To all Members & Visitors:

Children are God's gift to our church! They are not the future of our church, they are the right now. Remember, the way we welcome children here directly affects the way they respond to the Church, to God, and to one another. Let them know they are valued members of our church family.

Please welcome our children and give a smile of encouragement to their parents.



CHANCEL CHOIR

COVENANT: It's time to sing!

The Chancel Choir starts back with rehearsals this Thursday evening, September 9th at 7 PM in the choir room. We are still singing with masks, so please bring a mask you feel comfortable singing with to all rehearsals. We will discuss Sunday masks at rehearsal. Our first Sunday singing for worship will be Sunday, September 19th when we go to one service at 10 AM.

Challenge: know a friend (from church, from your neighborhood, from your work, well, from anywhere, really!) that loves to sing? Bring them to a rehearsal! Make an evening of it! Have dinner, come to sing. Let's grow our choir!

Much love to you all! I can't wait to see you!

Love,

CENTERING PRAYER

Covenant has reconvened a Centering Prayer practice on Thursdays at 8:30 am. The first 15 minutes will be an informal gathering with the practice beginning at 8:45 for 20 minutes. Centering prayer is a method of meditation that places a strong emphasis on interior silence. We allow ourselves to be totally open to God, learning how to gently release attention away from our inner thoughts. For more information, please send an email to covenant@covenantpcusa.org and in the subject line type Centering Prayer or contact Pastor Joel.

The Death Penalty.

Please put this **Saturday, September 18th** from 10:00 am to 11:30 am on your calendar. The Scioto Valley Presbytery is hosting a discussion of the Death Penalty, race, poverty, and pending legislation in Ohio. Elder Glen Schmidt, community organizer Nate Brown, and Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Executive Director of the Ohio Council of Churches, will help us understand the history of capital punishment in this country, learn what is happening right now in our Ohio legislature, and explore what it means to act with justice. To register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZMLcuChrDouGdY-69kHGCgCGX4W3RqRnUvK>

BUS DRIVERS NEEDED



The Properties Commission is seeking bus drivers to volunteer one Sunday morning a month to pickup and drop-off members for worship service. If interested, please contact Bob Tullett by sending an email to lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org.

GLOBAL MISSION

Check out the bulletin board near the north entrance of the church. There is information there about our three mission co-workers: Michael and Rachel Ludwig in Niger; Mark Hare and Jenny Bent in Costa Rica; and Elmarie and Scott Parker in Syria and the Middle East. You can find out more about each of these co-workers at [Presbyterian Mission Agency Mission Connections](#) | [Presbyterian Mission Agency](#).

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT & ADULT LEARNING COMMISSION

Wednesday Bible Study 1-2 pm: This Wednesday, 9/15, from 1-2 pm, we will continue to read and discuss 1 Corinthians. Please join us. No preparation is required. Ask for a Zoom link from lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org.

Wednesday Evening Book Study 7:00-8:00 p.m. - The CPC Book Group is postponing our start date by one week, to Wednesday, September 15. There is still time to get a copy of [My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies](#), by Resmaa Menakem, and familiarize yourself with the first section. Amazon is a good source if you are buying, and the [Columbus Metropolitan Library](#) has many paper copies available to borrow. Please call the church to be added to the group email, which will have the Zoom link.

Covenant Men's Spirituality Book Group will meet this Sunday, Sept. 12, 10-10:45 a.m., to continue our exploration of Richard Rohr's 2019 book, 'The Universal Christ', with focus on chapters 1-2. The group meets every other Sunday (Sept. 26 and Oct. 10 are the next dates). Please reach out to the church office or David Connolly directly if you are interested in joining!



PRAYER CHAIN

Contact Laurie Johnson (lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org) if you would like to join the members and friends of Covenant who pray for those requesting our prayers. The prayers will be relayed to you via email from Linda Van Aman. It is asked that you include the prayer request in your daily prayers for a week. To submit a prayer chain request, please send an email to covenant@covenantpcusa.org

and in the subject line type Prayer Chain. Note that the person for whom prayers are requested must give permission.

HM3 UPDATE – HOGE'S, MUSIC, MESSAGE, MEAL

Hoge Presbyterian Church offers the HM3 program every Saturday for its community in Franklinton including Music, Message, and a Meal. Area churches assist with the Meal, and Covenant creates and serves a hot, home-made meal every 3rd Saturday. Servers and guests are asked to wear masks when not eating.

Current attendance at HM3 leads us to bring enough for 50 meals. We need groups (or individuals) to step forward to serve.

- The third Saturdays for the rest of 2021 are covered! Thank you!
- We're accepting sign-ups for 2022, starting with January 15th, February 19th, and so on.

Please sign up and/or learn more through this tool: <https://bitly.com/CovenantHM3SignUp> or by contacting Cathy Levy (send an email to covenant@covenantpcusa.org and in the subject line type HM3/Levy). By splitting up the work, it's easy, and many of us can help our neighbors with life-giving food offered with open hearts.



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Covenant Presbyterian Women will begin its schedule of circle meetings and luncheons in September. The following circles will meet for fellowship and Bible study:

September 20 at 9:30 a.m. *Deborah Circle* will meet in room 120 at church for fellowship and study of the Horizons Bible study, "What My Grandmothers Taught Me: Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus", Lynn Elliott is moderator.

October Circles:

- *Elizabeth*, October 4, 7:30 p.m., Mona Connolly, moderator
- *Eunice-Lydia*, October 6 9:30 a.m., Sandy St. Martin, moderator
- *Miriam*, October 8 at 1:30 p.m., Gerlinde Lott, moderator

Other circles:

- September 9 and every Thursday at 1:00 p.m. Mission Sewing, Diana Sanders
- September 10 and 24 Prayer Shawl Circle, Louise Davidson and Nancy Davidson

CPW Circle leaders will have yearbooks and CPW brochures available during Circle meetings, as well as the new *Horizon's Bible Study* for \$10.

The September luncheon will be held at 11:30 a.m. today, September 15th in the Lounge and Courtyard. This is a **brown bag lunch**, so there is no charge. The speaker will be Gail Messick. As early retirees, Gail and her husband, Mike, served as Peace Corps volunteers in the southern African country of Eswatini from 2010-2014. They served at a privately run, faith-based HIV/AIDS orphanage, on a dairy farm. Each winter they return to help for 2-3 months. Gail will discuss the changes and challenges the orphanage faces that place new stresses on everyone. Gail, who works for the artisans, will offer beautiful, handcrafted items for sale. Prices are \$5 - \$22 (cash or checks only) and proceeds are sent to the artisans. Mission sewing items will also be available.

For more information about CPW circles, activities, and to make reservations contact Sandy St. Martin, CPW Moderator, covenant@covenantpcusa.org with CPW/Sandy St. Martin's name, Circle leader's names or person you wish to contact in the subject line.

WOMEN'S THEOLOGY

Members of *Women's Theology* gather on the first and third Friday each month from 9:30 to 11 am. For the September 17th meeting, discussion will continue of chapter 13. Reading is through chapter 15 of "The Days of Awe and Wonder: How to be a Christian in the Twenty-first Century" by Marcus Borg. For information, email covenant@covenantpcusa.org and in the subject line type Women's Theology/Susan Imel for information. The circle usually meets on Zoom, so contact Susan for location or sign in. New members are always welcome.

CHURCH FACILITIES POLICY

Indoor policy due to Franklin County COVID-19

Covenant's Mask Policy will conform with CDC guidelines. Wearing a mask inside our facility is recommended for everyone. Session will continue to monitor COVID 19 spread in the state of Ohio and adapt our policy as needed.

INFORMATION/MISCELLANEOUS

[Click here to check out all Covenant events and news on our website.](#)

Our Mission

Covenant Presbyterian Church is an accepting, welcoming community sharing the glory of God's love with all.

Our Vision

- Covenant will offer worship services that invite diverse expressions of faith and enable all who come to draw closer to God.
- Covenant will become a home through which all can practice their faith and humanity in service of others.

Stay in touch!

[Click here to receive our weekly emails.](#)



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