

Weekly Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church - December 22, 2021

Laurie Johnson, Office Manager & Newsletter Editor



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

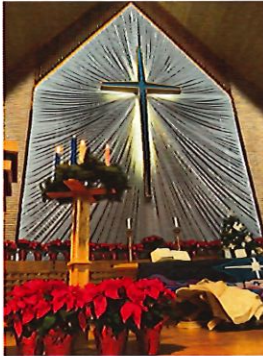


From our pastor

The last few weeks, our worship services have been truly special. Last Sunday's Cantata was an example of Covenant at its best, with excellence in music and the welcome of children. Our sanctuary has been filling up with people of all ages, and everyone belongs. After the service I've met several members who have returned to Covenant for the first time in nearly two years, and I relish saying two words them: "Welcome home." Home is a powerful word that we all long to know. Home is not merely a building or a group of people. We experience home when we are blessed to bring our whole selves to a community and be accepted and celebrated exactly as we are. This is both a description of Covenant and an aspiration. Churches like families don't always welcome us home, at least not the whole of who we are. But God does, and we aspire to do the same. This Christmas Eve, you are invited home to Covenant, this community of beautiful, imperfect, loving and striving to love more people. People of all ages are welcome at both the 5pm and 8pm services, and both services will be livestreamed. Wherever Christmas Eve finds you in 2021, know that Covenant will always welcome you home. This Sunday, December 26th we will have a service of Lessons and Carols. I will be on vacation from December 26-January 1, and I will return for worship on Sunday, January 2. If I don't see you, Merry Christmas to you and yours. I'm so glad to call Covenant my home.

One Struggle to Love,

Rev. Joel A. Esala



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Friday, December 24

5:00pm Family Service - Children & Youth will serve as readers & musicians

8:00pm Choir & Candles - The Chancel Choir & String Quartet will lead us on this holy night. *Please note that the prelude will begin 15 minutes prior to the service.*

Covenant Presbyterian Church



LYRATA STRING QUARTET
CHRISTMAS EVE
8 PM SERVICE

The Lyrata String Quartet will be playing at the 8pm Christmas Eve service.

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!

Adult Forum Class: Close to Home - There will be no Adult Forum on Sunday, Dec. 26th. We will return on January 2nd.

Children gather in the Multipurpose room (former administrative offices) at 9am before splitting into our classes. We sing, read, learn and dream together. Youth (6th-12th grades) meet in the chapel at 11am for snacks and discussion.

DEACONS' CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING

The offering at the Christmas Eve and Maundy Thursday services supports the work of the deacons. The Board of Deacons is not funded through the church budget. It is through this offering that the deacons serve our members and the community.

How does the Board of Deacons Serve? Deacons transport members to medical appointments through the C.A.R.E.S. ride program. Meals are prepared and delivered to those recuperating, celebrating births, and grieving. The deacons host memorial receptions. They are responsible for communion preparation. They also host the Red Cross Blood Drives. A special event will be held for our Super Seniors in the Spring. Emergency funding is available for members and those in the community.

Beyond our doors, a monthly breakfast is prepared and served at Ronald McDonald House. Deacons take a meal and join in fellowship with those at Hoge for HM3. We fight hunger through the Crop Walk, provide joy by organizing Adopt-A-Family at Christmas, and supply assistance to the Mid Ohio Workers Association. The deacons also extend support to the Mid Ohio Food Collective and COMPASS at Broad Street Presbyterian Church.

LIST OF CHRISTMAS GIFT GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Many thanks to all who took advantage of one or more of the different ways Covenant offered to share the glory of God's love during the Advent Season! To see the entire list and information on how our members participated in these giving opportunities (including deadlines and contact information for each), please stop by the table in the church lobby for a copy of the list. Or, contact the church office, Cathy Levy, or Beth Askue, who will send you a copy. Or, download the list from here:

<https://covenantpcusa.org/advent-2021>

Deadlines have passed for most of the ministries, but the two remaining opportunities to give include:

- Christmas Joy Offering (Beth Askue)
- Deacons' Christmas Eve Offering (Terry Kennedy Mancini)

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

Now that we are worshipping in person again, you may once more sign up for flowers to be placed in the sanctuary for Sunday worship to honor loved ones, a special occasion, or just to the glory of God. The dedication information will be listed in the Sunday bulletin. The arrangements will cost \$40.

To order flowers, please contact the church office by sending an email to lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org by Tuesday of each week that you wish to have flowers in the sanctuary. Let the office know which date you are requesting, your name, contact information and any dedication information. You may request future dates as well. Payment can be in cash or check.

WEST HIGH COWBOY BUCKS STORE A SUCCESS

Cap City Helping Hands extends a hearty thank you to Covenant for all the contributions to the West High Cowboy Bucks store. The photo below shows students shopping in a fully stocked store the first day. In addition to the contributions from Covenant members, the Deacons contributed funds to support the store and Covenant's Neighborhood Committee collected gifts from neighbors. Thanks to all who contributed to this very worthwhile project.



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Covenant is once again participating in the Habitat NW Partnership Adopt a House by helping to finance and build a house this year. Construction has begun on the house located at 1252 E. 15th Ave. in South Linden. Volunteers work on the house on Thursday mornings and Saturdays from 8:30 to 3:00. Lunch on Saturday is provided.

We are in need of men and women volunteers to help with the construction. You can just show up either day at 8:30am and you will be instructed on how to proceed. John Fisher is the House Lead. All equipment you will need is provided. Just wear appropriate clothing and hard soled shoes, or tennis shoes with a thick sole.

For more information please contact either Betsy Sebastian at 219-208-5602 or grammyseb@gmail.com, or Charlie Bergmann at 614-572-5059 or ctbergmann@yahoo.com.

CENTERING PRAYER

Covenant has reconvened a Centering Prayer practice on Thursdays at 8:30am in the Lounge. 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.

GLOBAL MISSION

Effective in 2022, PC(USA) will use one fund, **General Sending and Support E132193**, to support all of our mission co-workers. You can make your gift to the one fund "in honor of" [name of the person]. This will at long last remove the burden of personal fundraising from each mission co-worker. Covenant has a close relationship with Mark Hare and Jenny Bent in Costa Rica; and Elmarie and Scott Parker in Syria and Middle East. You can find out more about each of these co-workers at [Presbyterian Mission Agency Mission Connections](#) | [Presbyterian Mission Agency](#).



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Covenant Presbyterian Women's Circles meet for fellowship and discussion of the Horizons Bible Study, "What My Grandmothers Taught Me: Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus. Circle members look forward to meeting again in January.

January Circles:

- Elizabeth, Monday, January 3 at 7:30 p.m., Mona Connolly, moderator
- Eunice-Lydia, Wednesday, January 5 at 9:30 a.m., Sandy St. Martin, moderator
- Miriam, Wednesday, January 12 at 1:30 p.m., Gerlinde Lott, moderator
- Deborah, Monday, January 17 at 9:30 a.m. at church, Lynn Elliott, moderator

Other circles:

- Mission Sewing, every Thursday at 1:00 p.m. Mission Sewing, Diana Sanders
- Prayer Shawl Circle, January 14 and 28 at 9:30 a.m. in the Lounge, Louise Davidson and Nancy Davidson. New knitters are welcome; yarn is available. Join us!

For more information about CPW circles and activities, contact Sandy St. Martin, CPW moderator, covenant@covenantpcusa.org with CPW/Sandy St. Martin's name in the subject line. Circle leaders may be contacted in the same format.

WOMEN'S THEOLOGY

Members of **Women's Theology** gather on the first and third Friday each month from 9:30 to 11 am. Next meeting is January 7th. The group will discuss chapters 7-9 of Joan Chittister's challenging book, *The Time is*

Now. For information, send email to covenant@covenantpcusa.org and in the subject line type Women's Theology/Susan Imel. The circle usually meets on Zoom, so contact Susan for location or sign in. New members are always welcome.

SPIRITUAL CINEMA

Wednesday, 12/29, we will gather in the Lounge, wearing masks, at 6:30 pm to watch *The Wife*: As Joe is about to be awarded the Nobel Prize for his acclaimed and prolific body of work, his wife Joan (Glenn Close) starts to think about their shared compromises, secrets and betrayals. We will stay for a short time after the film to discuss its merits and message. Come join us.

CATCH COURT

The CATCH Court Christmas lunch on December 16th was a very happy event. Fellowship Hall looked festive, gift bags were prepared, and Covenant's wonderful cooks had a delicious meal ready to serve. Everyone was greeted warmly by others and had a wonderful time visiting during lunch. Some women played musical chairs! The staff of Freedom a la Cart and the Court attended, too. It was a very happy day!



A special thanks to all the many elf's who made this special event a success!



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT & ADULT LEARNING COMMISSION

Wednesday Bible Study 1-2 pm: Wednesday Bible Study - We will not be meeting 12/29. On Wednesday, January 5, @ 1 pm, we will practice Lectio Divina, a spirit-guided prayer and response to scripture. On Wednesday, January 12, we will resume our study of the Letter to the Hebrews. 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 will meet this Wednesday, December 15 at 7:00 p.m. for its third and final discussion of Borg and Crossan's *The First Christmas*. We will resume in January with a title to be determined by a survey of suggested book titles. Be sure to register your opinion by clicking on this link and choosing your top 3: [CPC Book Group Survey](#). Please contact Tori Vazquez or the church for Wednesday night's Zoom link.

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.

- 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.

Here we share part of a letter of thanks from one of the members of the HM3 community from the October 16th HM3 program. He made several copies and left them on the tables for us to discover, and at the top of the letter, he wrote, "Disseminate widely".

I want to thank you for all the meals that you've provided for me. I know that all of you put in a lot of work, time, for this donation. I compliment the creative efforts in this endeavor. I thank all of you for the respect that you show me (us) while doing this charity service. You are under no obligation (as far as I know) to give your precious resources of time and effort in this charitable endeavor. Time can't be recovered.... Thank you so much....

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.

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

- There will be no children's or youth education at 9am and 11am on Dec. 26.
- The nursery will be closed on Dec. 26.
- In observance of the Christmas/New Year holidays, the church office will be closed from Dec. 27-31.

- As a gentle reminder, the church provides disposable face masks but if possible please bring your own face mask for inside the church facilities. Thank you!

[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.](#)



Covenant Presbyterian Church | 2070 Ridgecliff Rd., Columbus, OH 43221

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