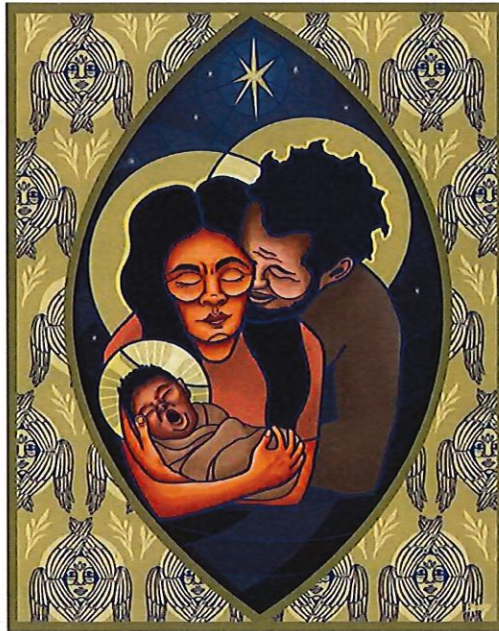


Weekly Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church - December 29, 2021

Laurie Johnson, Office Manager & Newsletter Editor



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



**"Ordinary Glory"**

by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

## **From our pastor**

Today is the fifth day of Christmas. Culturally, Christmas ends on December 25, but for the church it is but the first of a twelve-day celebration. I hope this Christmas is one that you have found yourself invited home to the ordinary glory of your life. Christmas means that God has taken up residence in our real and imperfect world, and that's exactly where God meets us. It's in the ordinary glory of the mundane that God shows up to remind us that we belong. Rev. Sarah Speed's poem "Invitations" captures this beautifully:

I've been thinking about a universal truth—the way we all want to be invited in. We want the door to be opened with cheers of, "You're here!" We want the clerk at the store to ask how we're doing, and the waiter to wink at us and whisper, "Good choice." We want the barista to learn our names, which people call being "a regular," but it feels more like being known. We want the stranger to help us pick up our sodas when the case



breaks, and the woman to put her bag in her lap on the subway, which is to mean, "Come, you can sit by me." We cherish every open palm wave from the child in the grocery store and every city church with open doors when the organist plays.

At the end of the day we are all just a collection of heart and bones walking through this world, exchanging invitations, saying to one another in a million little ways— come matter here. Come make a difference here. Come be you, here.

Jesus didn't receive much of an invitation.

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!**

Adult Forum Class - We will return on January 2nd.

Children Christian Education - We will return on January 2nd.

## **Welcome Items for Afghan Families**

We are excited to start this network of people and organizations who want to help newly resettled Afghans in the Columbus area. It is our desire to connect those in need to those that want to help.

There have been ten Afghan families resettled close to the Riverview International Center and I've had the pleasure of meeting with five of them so far. We anticipate there will be more in the Riverview area and have heard about some being resettled in the Dublin area as well. We've been advised that resettlements will continue into the first quarter of next year. As we get connected with more families in Columbus, we'll continue to update the list of needed items. If you are or get connected with an Afghan family in need, please let us know.



We are in communication with the resettlement agencies in Columbus, and they are eager for our help as well as they are currently overwhelmed. I know many folks have donated welcome kits to CRIS and we are coordinating with them for any items they can provide to the families. The families we are helping were evacuated by the US Government in August, have completed the US required vetting process while being housed at a US Military base and are now making Columbus their home. All five of the families I've been able to meet with so far worked alongside our US Military- these are truly our allies and friends and we're excited to welcome them into our community.

Most of the families arrived in the US with a few small bags of personal items and they need our help with items for their new homes. **Below is a SignUp Genius link with a list of current needs.** Some items as indicated need to be new. Other items can be gently used/ "like new" but please make sure any of these items are clean, without stains or tears and are fully functioning (a family I met yesterday received a used lamp that was broken, an electric tea pot that didn't work and a couch with no cushions). It's very important that any furniture or rugs donated are in great to good condition and bed bug free.

**Important Info:** At this time, we are looking for items to be donated vs. money. It's possible gift cards can be donated- if you are interested in this please reach out directly. We ask that any organization or church collecting items store the items and work with us to coordinate drop off. We do not currently have anywhere to store items. We also ask the individuals wanting to donate items to be able to drop them off to the families. If you have items to donate but absolutely can not drop them off, please reach out directly to discuss.

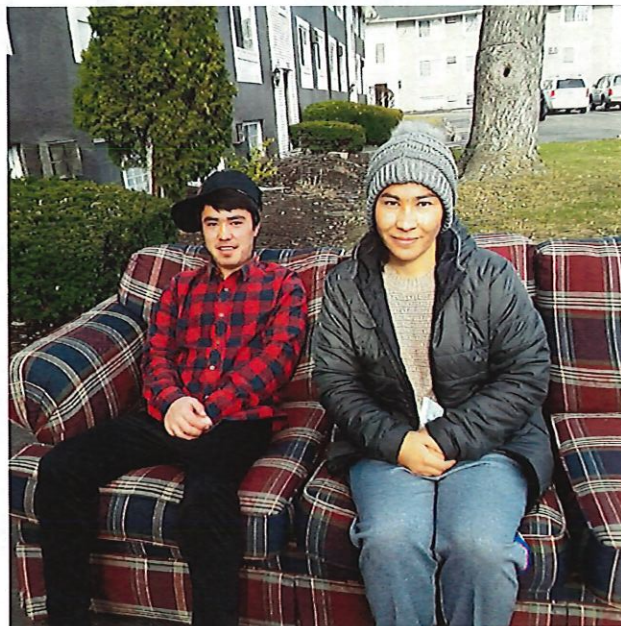
Please add your name or organization next to any items you wish to donate. Once you have the items ready, please reach out via this email or call/text me at 614-285-7006, and myself or another volunteer will help coordinate the drop off with families.

**Link to items needed:** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050D4CA9AE2EABFC1-welcome>

Please offer us grace as we work to establish this new network in Columbus. The staff at the Riverview International Center, Kevin Vereide with Immigrant and Refugee Elevate Group and myself are excited to partner with you all on this effort!

Thank you,

Kristi Williams  
Ph: 614- 285-7006  
Riverview Afghan Network  
Riverview International Center



A special thanks to Gail Messick who helped to coordinate the donation and delivery of an unused Covenant church sofa to a resettled afghan family in Columbus. Christmas joy!!



## Thank you for your Hospitality extended to the families of MWA for Christmas!

Thank you, members of Covenant, for your hospitality extended to the families of MWA (Mid-Ohio Workers Association) this Christmas. This partnership helps us work side by side with people from all backgrounds across Columbus to serve our neighbors. Members of the MWA are low-paid workers or underemployed workers. They help one another as members of the association through various programs to help lift one another out of poverty. Also, area church members (including Covenant) and other businesses and professionals help as volunteers and givers.

Thank you for...

- Donating Lovely Toys for all ages (over 200)
- Sharing our Fellowship Hall for the Toy Sort
- Giving Time and Talent during the Toy Sort (3 members)
- Sharing our Room 121 to store the Toy Boxes (55!)
- Sharing our Fellowship Hall to Host the Christmas Party
- Giving Time and Talent during the Christmas Party (2 members)
- Through the Deacons, Donating all the turkeys and many groceries for the food boxes (68!)
- Sharing our Kitchen and Parking Lot to create the Food Boxes

When combined with the many other members and volunteers from MWA, the donations from others of many more toys and food items,

all were fed, all the children got two toys each, and all felt the...

*LOVE OF CHRIST and the  
GLORY OF GOD'S LOVE  
as we partnered with the community, practicing our  
FAITH AND HUMANITY in service of others. Praise God!*



## 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](mailto: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.

---

## 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. 15<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:grammyseb@gmail.com), or Charlie Bergmann at 614-572-5059 or [ctbergmann@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 7<sup>th</sup>. 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](mailto: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.

## 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](mailto:lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org)

**Wednesday Evening Book Study 7:00-8:00 p.m.** - The CPC Book Group will resume on Wednesday, January 5, at 7:00 p.m. to discuss the first four chapters of Barbara Brown Taylor's book, [Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others](#). Click on this link to read a description and to order from Amazon. The Columbus Metropolitan Libraries currently have 30+ copies available for lending. Please contact the church or Tori Vazquez for a Zoom link.

On Sunday, Jan. 2, the **Men's Spirituality Reading Group** will meet at 9 a.m. in Room 120 to continue their discussion of Richard Rohr's 'Universal Christ', with focus on chapters 15-16. Newcomers are always welcome - please reach out to David Connolly for additional information.



## 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](mailto: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....*

## HM3/Hoge Dinner and Christmas Party 2021!

On December 18, Covenant's Elizabeth Circle again hosted the "HM3" Christmas Dinner and Party at Hoge Memorial Presbyterian on West Broad Street in the Hilltop area. This year's event was attended by over 60 friends and neighbors of Hoge.

The festivities started with a worship service conducted by Pastor Tom Billman and singing carols accompanied by a flutist. Then dinner was served, featuring ham, potato casserole, other sides, bread donated by Panera – and wonderful cookies prepared by Carol Petro! Food was so plentiful that many were able to take extra meals "to go" for loved ones at home.

After dinner, everyone was invited in groups of ten at a time, to choose a gift from a wide range of age-appropriate warm clothes and even a few toys, books, and other items donated by Covenant members. So many gifts had been donated that everyone was able to come up for a "second" gift! Additionally, gift bags were given to all; each bag included a Cheryl's Cookie, homemade buckeyes and a handmade Christmas card along with a \$25 Kroger gift card.

Thanks to the people of Covenant for your continued generous support with gifts and donations. The circle of friends who provided this outreach owe a debt of gratitude to Cathy Levy, for her loving and effective leadership of the event.

Hoge's "HM3" program provides music, a message and a meal for the Hoge neighborhood on the third Saturday of each month. Covenant's involvement, originally launched by Tracy Keenan, includes serving the meal every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday.

Please reach out to Cathy if you wish to learn more or get involved in this monthly opportunity for "hands-on" mission in our community!

Mona Connolly

## PRAYER CHAIN





Contact Laurie Johnson ([lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org](mailto: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](mailto: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

- 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.](#)





[Unsubscribe {recipient's email}](#)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by covenant@covenantpcusa.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!



