

Weekly Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church - May 4, 2022

Laurie Johnson, Office Manager & Newsletter Editor



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

## **From our pastor**

*He asked a third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was sad that Jesus asked him a third time, "Do you love me?" He replied, "Lord, you know everything; you know I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep." John 21:17*

We had quite a weekend at Covenant this past week! On Saturday, over 50 people came to Brian Ellison's workshop, *Becoming an Inclusive and Welcoming Church*. Brian shared his personal story of how he as a gay man had to hide that part of his life from his church for many years and how difficult that was on him. When it comes to divisive issues, personal stories are more helpful than debates. It's easy to have a theoretical discussion about the meaning of marriage and ordination but hearing how policies and practices have affected people personally is transformative. Barbara Marshall and Roberta Adams also shared their testimonies on the power of inclusion during the workshop. Brian walked us through the history of LGBTQIA+ inclusion in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and shared concrete steps our church can take. If you missed it, you can watch the video of the entire workshop [here](#). On Sunday, Brian also preached a powerful sermon called, "A Disciple of Love" in which he shared more stories of how the church has often not been a safe place for LGBTQIA+ people. One thing he said really stuck out to me: "The mark of a disciple's love for Jesus is in what we do for God's people. The sheep. The lambs. The most vulnerable of us." That's so true. Our love for Jesus is not measured by how many church services we attend or how much of the Bible we read. Our love for Jesus is directly proportional to our love for the most vulnerable in our midst, and that love takes many forms. We demonstrate of love for Christ through our support for Habitat for Humanity, CATCH Court, HM3, Open Shelter, and the many other great service ministries of our church. The truth is there are many vulnerable people in our midst, and Jesus calls us to love them all. It's never an either/or, when it comes to love. It's always both/and. In processing what we learned this weekend, I heard several Covenant members say we need to take what we are learning about the LGBTQIA+ community and apply that to people with disabilities and people in poverty and people of color. I couldn't agree more. Opening our hearts to love like Christ means our capacity to love is infinite. There is room at God's table for us all. The most moving part of the weekend for me was serving the Lord's Supper alongside Brian and having him share the body and blood of Christ with me. If you'd like to watch Sunday's service, you can do that [here](#), and if you'd just like to hear Brian's sermon you can do that [here](#). The journey to love is just beginning, and we are all invited.





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** - There will not be any 9am Sunday, May 8th Adult Forum Class in the Lounge. Please have an extra cup of coffee and enjoy Mother's Day!

**Children Christian Education** - Sunday, May 8th @ 9am - Children gather in the Multipurpose room before splitting into our classes. We sing, read, learn and dream together. Youth (6th-12th grades) **NO YOUTH GROUP TODAY**. Enjoy celebrating your moms.

## ATTENTION GRADUATES

We will be honoring our graduates in worship on Sunday, May 22. If you, your child or grandchild are graduating from high school, college or are earning a graduate degree, please email [lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org](mailto:lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org) by May 16 and let us know their name, school attended, degree earned (if applicable) and future plans.

## Covenant is on FaithLife! Stay Connected

Welcome to Covenant Presbyterian's online community! Check back often to stay up to date on upcoming events, learn more about opportunities to serve, share prayer requests or praise reports, or to connect with your groups.

### Why Faithlife?

#### *Build Relationships, Deepen Word Study & Avoid the Noise*

Are you tired of scrolling through cat videos and political rants? Do you want to stay connected with your church family on a deeper level? That is why Covenant has started using Faithlife, and you can, too! This is an app and/or website that you can join for free. It allows you to follow everything church related, from daily verses and weekly sermons to prayer requests and praises from our church members, and SO MUCH MORE.

Get started **today** by visiting [faithlife.com](http://faithlife.com) or downloading the Faithlife app and joining the Covenant Presbyterian Church group.

For a detailed overview of ALL you can do with hyperlinks, click here: [Join Covenant on FaithLife](#)



## SUPER SENIOR CELEBRATION LUNCHEON SUNDAY, MAY 15 @ 11AM

SUPER CELEBRATION LUNCHEON May 15. Plan to be there:!)  
Questions-please contact Charlotte Rodenfels 614-404-7235 or Jeanie Auseon 614-329-4810. (Super Senior members are ages 80 and over).

## GET TO KNOW YOUR PASTOR



Due to COVID, Covenant did not have the opportunity for a live meet and greet gathering with Pastor Joel. Invitations are being sent to members of the congregation who have not had an opportunity to have a conversation with Joel. Invitations are being sent out to select groups of 15. The RSVP invitations are intended to keep the groups small, allowing more time for conversation. The dates and times will vary for each group. The frequency of these dates, and if they continue, will depend on the responses received. If you would like to take part in this opportunity, please let us know by sending an email to [covenant@covenantpcusa.org](mailto:covenant@covenantpcusa.org) or by calling 614-451-6677, X11.

## **Birthday Offering of Presbyterian Women**

The Birthday Offering, one of two PW annual offerings, is celebrating 100 years of awarding grants to projects in the US and around the world to help meet the needs of PW mission partners and to spread the Good News of Christ. It was so named, as women were asked to offer "A penny for every year you have lived, and if that is a secret, bring a dollar!"

Since 1922, the PW Birthday Offering has awarded life-giving grants to 222 projects. This year's grants will help renovate McCleary House in Farmington, Maine for people experiencing homelessness and will enable Presbyterian Church in Lares, Puerto Rico, to provide food, purified water and personal items to people suffering from hurricane and earthquake damage.

We ask your support of the Birthday Offering so PW can continue funding mission projects for the next 100 years.

Checks should be made to CPW with "Birthday Offering" on the memo line.

## **Four Opportunities for You! The Presbytery of Scioto Valley would like to make you aware of the following upcoming events/programs:**

### **Called to be Easter People - A Matthew 25 Challenge**

Beginning on Easter Sunday, all churches in our presbytery are being encouraged to join our "We Are Easter People Challenge". The goal of the challenge is for Scioto Valley congregations to jointly log 2022 hours of Matthew 25-related mission service during the seven week-period between Easter and Pentecost. Our efforts, and those of our fellow Scioto Valley Presbyterians, will be recorded and celebrated throughout the challenge. The only requirement is that the hours of service be undertaken by a congregation and directed to our brothers and sisters Christ called "the least of these:" those who hunger, those who thirst, those who are sick, those who are strangers, those who are imprisoned, those who are naked. Your congregation is encouraged to send weekly updates to the presbytery office at [dagmar@psvonline.org](mailto:dagmar@psvonline.org). Please include your church name, the project, how many hours, a contact person, and email. Thank you.

**Our presbytery is offering an anti-racism book study and conversation over zoom for three Thursdays in May, the 12th, 19th, and 26th from 1:00 -2:00 p.m.** Whether you have been an ally for years or just recently opened your eyes to racial injustice, guiding your predominantly white church toward anti-racism is a daunting task. Join other members of presbytery for a book study on *Wait - Is This Racist? A Guide to Becoming an Anti-racist Church* by Kerry Connelly, Bryana Clover, and Josh Riddick. This book will guide church leaders and staff through an examination of all aspects of church life, including leadership, preaching and liturgy, music, small groups, buildings, and grounds, and more, to help churches create an action plan that will take them toward not only becoming anti-racist but also actually *doing* anti-racist work and becoming a justice-oriented organization that leans more fully into the kin-dom of God. We will meet



on zoom for three Thursdays in May, the 12th, 19th, and 26th from 1:00 -2:00 pm. You are responsible for getting your own book. Register in advance for this meeting at a link on the calendar at [psvonline.org](https://psvonline.org)

Plans are underway for our **Presbytery Youth Retreat at Camp Akita** this fall on November 12-13. Be sure to mark your calendars and save the date!

This year our Presbytery will offer two mission locations in West Virginia for **Presbytery mission work teams the week of October 23-29**. We will be working with the West Virginia Mission Advocacy Workcamps (WVMAW ) at locations in Colcord, West Virginia and Hampden, West Virginia. Applications will be available soon. Contact Jeannie Harsh at [jeannie@psvonline.org](mailto:jeannie@psvonline.org) if you are interested in putting your name on the mission work team list.

Peace and Grace,

Dagmar M. Ramage  
The Presbytery of Scioto Valley  
4131 North High Street, Suite B  
Columbus, OH 43214-3001



## Presbyterian Disaster Assistance - Ukraine

We are grateful for the outpouring of prayers and calls from congregations and individuals asking how they can help. As the violence continues, the number of people being displaced internally and fleeing to neighboring countries increases by the day. And in the midst of the chaos, there are sibling

churches and ecumenical partners who are already providing assistance with basic items for survival. Our first priority as PDA is to provide funding to these partners on the ground. While the scale of this crisis is new, receiving refugees from Ukraine and other countries in Central and Eastern Europe is not, which means we have trusted, established partners with the knowledge and expertise to carry out this important work.

We are hearing that the reformed churches in Ukraine and the region are also feeling called to join in the humanitarian response. PDA, therefore, anticipates that our response will include both financial and technical assistance as the network of faith communities providing humanitarian assistance grows in the months ahead.

As we pray for an end to this violence, we ask the U.S. Government and our European allies to make a commitment to the Ukrainian people for a peaceful solution. We don't know how long it will take, but we know that they will need help with the rebuilding of their country so that those who are fleeing now may one day return home safely.

**To support our response, designate gifts to DR000156 or text PDAUKR to 41444**



## 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.



Freedom a la Cart provides a \$15 toiletries bag to women who are being released from jail. Covenant members have been generous with support for these bags pre-pandemic. We realize the need is still there and are asking for donations to continue this effort. If you wish to contribute, please make checks payable to Covenant and indicate "human trafficking toiletry bags" on the memo line.

## 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.



## COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

### *Birthday Luncheon May 18, 2022*

The annual CPW Birthday Luncheon will be held Wednesday, 11:30 am on May 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am. Lunch will be served. Our speakers will be Carol Evans, a member at First Presbyterian Church of Delaware, and Nikki Hogarth, head of family ministry at First Presbyterian Church. Carol and Nikki will share their work with the Laundry Love Project, a mission to assist those who need laundry assistance. There is no charge, but reservations should be placed either in the hallway on Sundays or by contacting the office at 614- 451-6677. All are invited. Donations for the project will be accepted.

**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.

- May 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am, Eunice-Lydia, Sandy St. Martin, moderator
- May 11 at 1:30 pm, Miriam, Gerlinde Lott, moderator

Other circles:

- Every Thursday at 1:00 p.m. Mission Sewing, Diana Sanders
- May 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. in the Lounge, Prayer Shawl Circle( 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays,) Louise Davidson and Nancy Davidson

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, the Circle leader's name or name of the person you wish to contact in the subject line.



## WOMEN'S THEOLOGY

Members of *Women's Theology* will continue reading and discussing Amy Jill Levine's *The Difficult Words of Jesus* with Chapter 4 on May 6<sup>th</sup>. They will meet again on May 20<sup>th</sup> when Chapter 5 will be considered. New participants are always welcome. Meetings are on Zoom, so check with Susan Imel or Louise Davidson for information and to join the discussion the first and third Friday each month from 9:30 to 11 am.

## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT & ADULT LEARNING COMMISSION

**Wednesday Bible Study 1-2 pm: Wednesday Bible Study** - We will continue our study of the Book of Daniel. A great introduction can be found at <https://bibleproject.com>. Please join us. No preparation is required. We read and share together. Ask for a Zoom link from [lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org](mailto:lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org).

**Wednesday Evening Book Study 7:00-8:00 p.m.** - In keeping with the church's current offerings, the book group will read [\*The Savvy Ally: A Guide for Becoming a Skilled LGBTQ+ Advocate\*](#), by Jeannie Gainsburg. This will build on last weekend's activities. Because you are only just receiving this title, we will not meet this Wednesday 5/4 but get together on 5/11 via Zoom to cover the first couple of chapters. This book was recommended by Forum guest speaker Drew Rock. I will invite him to join us. In the summer we will take a look at Rob Bell's [\*Everything is Spiritual\*](#). Please contact the church or Tori Vazquez for the link.

## Opportunity to Serve by Providing Lunch through the OPEN SHELTER

Do you want to do hands-on mission once a month or occasionally? We would love to welcome new people to the Open Shelter Lunch Making Team!

Covenant helps out people in need (including the homeless) served by the Open Shelter by providing 175 sack lunches on the **second Friday of every month**. We are revising the menu and process, and we need more volunteers to help out! Here are ways to join in:

- Anytime, you could **drop off your clean take-out containers** (reusable disposable food containers) to counter under the windows of Covenant's kitchen. We take them to the Open Shelter to help people take home leftovers from donated restaurant meals. When these meals are donated, people are encouraged to take sack lunches with them to-go as well.
- You could help with supplies for the sack lunches; we would let you know the quantity, and you'd deliver them to Covenant's kitchen by the Thursday before the delivery day (church closes at 4pm) or by the second Friday of the month at 8:15, when we assemble the sack lunches. The costs for these supplies may be reimbursed by submitting your receipts to our Financial Administrator, Ingrid Brooker. Ways to help include:
  - You could **shop** for supplies (like paper bags and napkins from GFS, drinks, plastic bags, sandwich makings, bananas...)
  - You could **make 45 or 90 bags of unsalted nuts** at your home.
  - You could **make 45 or 90 bags of baby carrots** at your home.
  - You could **make 30 Peanut Butter and Jelly sandwiches** at your home.
- You could **help make 160 ham and cheese sandwiches with the team at Covenant's kitchen, and then assemble** the lunches into paper bags and pack them in boxes and into a car (or two) between 8:15 and 9:10 am on the second Friday of the month.
- You could **transport** the lunches and other supplies from Covenant to the Open Shelter on Parsons Ave. by 9:30 on the second Friday of the month. This takes either two drivers or one driver with a



minivan.

By splitting up the work, we can get more people involved sharing the Love of Christ in our community. Join us!

Questions? We would love to answer them! Would you like to join us in one or more of these ways? Fantastic! Please contact us to discuss this and/or sign up.



## 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. At this point in the pandemic, the wearing of masks is optional for both servers and guests.

Current attendance at HM3 leads us to bring enough for 50 meals.

- Usually, Covenant members cook in their own homes and then bring the food to Hoge to serve from the Hoge Kitchen. Alternatively, you can prepare the food as a group in the Covenant kitchen and carry it to Hoge. For example, in April, the SOS Food Pantry team prepared part of the meal in the Covenant Kitchen as a team activity and then brought the food to Hoge.
- Groups have signed up to serve in the months throughout the year of 2022... **THANK YOU! Group leaders:** If your group is lacking servers or chefs, let Cathy know; she has contacts for volunteers who can join your team. **Chefs:** Your expenses incurred in cooking may be reimbursed through our Financial Administrator, Ingrid Smith.
- Cathy Levy will gather an **ad-hoc group** to serve on **November 19**; please let her know if you'd like to join as a chef or a server for November.
- **If you or your kids would like to help out** as a chef (usually, in your own home) and/or server (from 4-7pm) during one of those 3rd Saturdays where a group already is signed up, **go ahead and contact that groups' leader**; we'll bet they would LOVE to include you on the team! You can find the leader's name on the website, or you can ask Cathy Levy, and she'll connect you up.

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.

## 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.





## WEBSITE REQUEST FORM

Does your Commission need something placed on the website? Does a form need updated, or an announcement need to be made? Click below and submit a website request as soon as possible to have information added or changed on the Covenant website.

### [WEBSITE REQUEST FORM](#)

## 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 optional for everyone. Session will continue to monitor COVID 19 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.](#)



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

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