



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

From our pastor

"God has shown me that I should never call a person impure or unclean." Acts 10:28

In Acts 10-11, Peter is criticized by the Jerusalem church for daring to enter the home of a Gentile and eating with them. This may strike us as odd, closed minded, and even xenophobic. Why was the early church so concerned with whom Peter dines? Didn't they know that God loves Gentiles? Of course, they knew that. The question they had to wrestle with was how do we love people that our faith tells us to remain separate from? You see the Bible is quite clear on what makes a person unclean. If you look up Leviticus 11 and read the food laws, you will see it's not ambiguous. There are certain unclean foods God forbade Jews to eat, and by extension there are certain unclean people with whom you must keep a distance. It wasn't personal and wasn't meant to be hateful. It's just what faith called them to do. And for all Jesus' talk about loving one another, he never said, "By the way, when I'm gone, you can forget all those laws about clean and unclean in the Bible. Those no longer apply!" He never said that. He simply told us to love one another, and then he left it up to us to figure out how far that love goes.

It's revealing that Peter doesn't get into a debate about scriptural interpretation and why the Levitical food laws no longer apply. He simply says tells the story of what happened to him and how God was in it. When he does, those who had criticized him suddenly have a change of heart. They discovered that grace was so much more inclusive than they imagined, so much bigger than even the scriptures had previously revealed. If they were to follow where the Spirit was leading, they needed to let go of their old understandings of who God was and what the scriptures required and trust that love goes to the very people they thought were unclean and left out. The church is meant to be a place where the categories of insider and outsider, clean and unclean, gloriously fade away, a community that says even if the rest of world excludes you, here you belong. Here you are seen for who you are and loved just as you are. As we discern where the Spirit is leading us, may we listen for the stories of God's presence in unexpected places.

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 - This Sunday in adult education, Mona Connolly and Tori Vazquez will lead a discussion from the Wired Word, considering how recent events in the world might be viewed through the lens of our Christian faith. Participants will receive a brief article to read during the first minutes of class, and then will respond to discussion questions and related scripture passages. We hope you will be able to join us in the Lounge at 9am.

Children Christian Education - Sunday, May 22 @ 9am - Last education hour! Children gather in the Multipurpose room for a celebration of all we have learned this year. Youth will meet at 11am for a final youth group celebration!

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 or by calling 614-451-6677, X11.

MEALS FOR MEMBERS IN NEED

Would you be willing to provide a meal or two for Covenant members whose health problems keep them temporarily from cooking? The Deacons have recently re-activated this program and are looking for cooks to volunteer their services. Contact Steve St. Martin or John Harder if you are willing.

INGRID SMITH - RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

After 25 years, our Financial Administrator, Ingrid Smith, is retiring. In appreciation of Ingrid's dedication and service to Covenant, a retirement celebration will be held on Sunday, June 5th after the worship service in Fellowship Hall. Hope to see you there!

Report of the Clerk

Covenant's Session met at their regular meeting on Monday May 9, 2022.

After devotions and prayer by Moderator Joel Esala, here are the highlights from the business conducted by our Session.

Lynn Elliott, Chair of Personnel, introduced Janice and Don Hilkerbaumer as candidates for Covenant's Parish Associates position. Both Janice and Don are retired Presbyterian ministers with years of service in our Scioto Valley Presbytery. Session approved hiring Janice and Don who, beginning in June, will work a combined 10 hours per week focusing mainly on member visitations. Lynn also reported Covenant will hire a contract janitorial service beginning the end of June.

Lynn Pratt has agreed, in addition to his role as Chair of the Stewardship & Budget Commission, to chair the Nominating Committee.

After considerable discussion, Session approved adding a 9:00 – 9:30 am Sunday outdoor prayer service in the courtyard starting in June and running through the end of August.

Session discussed and reviewed the Welcoming and Inclusion workshop held on Saturday May 30. Over 50 people attended and Session felt the workshop was well received and gave us a clear picture of what a Welcoming and Inclusive congregation would be.

The Welcoming and Inclusion Taskforce will be scheduling a series of listening sessions with the goal of giving everyone the opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions on this very important decision for Covenant.

Moderator Esala closed the meeting with prayer at 8:00 pm.

The next Session meeting is Monday June 13th.

Faithfully,

Jim Hamilton,
Clerk of Session

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. 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 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

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 if you are interested in putting your name on the mission work team list.

Peace and Grace,

Dagmar M. Romage
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

SPIRITUAL CINEMA

Wednesday, 5/25, we will gather in the Lounge, at 6:30 pm to watch *The Bucket List* (2007). It is the story of two middle-aged men (Jack Nickolson and Morgan Freeman) who have nothing in common other than they have terminal cancer. We will stay for a short time after the film to discuss its merits and message. Come join us.



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.



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 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 18th 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.

- 1st Monday at 7:00 pm, Elizabeth Circle, Mona Connolly, moderator
- 1st Wednesday at 9:30 am, Eunice-Lydia Circle, Sandy St. Martin, moderator
- 2nd Wednesday at 1:30 pm, Miriam Circle, Gerlinde Lott, moderator
- 3rd Monday, at 9:30 am, Deborah Circle, Lynn Elliott, moderator

Other circles:

- Every Thursday at 1:00 p.m. Mission Sewing, Diana Sanders

· May 27th at 9:30 a.m. in the Lounge, Prayer Shawl Circle(2nd and 4th Fridays,) Louise Davidson and Nancy Davidson

For more information about CPW circles and activities, contact Sandy St. Martin, CPW moderator, 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* on May 20th 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 - May 18, we will practice Lectio Divina, a spirit-guided prayer and response to scripture. Wednesday, May 25, we will finish the study of the book of Daniel, looking at chapter 7. In June, we will begin reading Susanna, also called Susanna and the Elders. Please join us. No preparation is required. We read and share together. Ask for a Zoom link from lauriejohnson@covenantpcusa.org.

Wednesday Evening Book Study 7:00-8:00 p.m. - The CPC Book Group will conclude its discussion of *The Savvy Ally* by Jeannie Gainsburg this Wednesday evening, May 18, at 7:00 p.m. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday evening, June 1 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss Rob Bell's book, *Everything is Spiritual*. Pastor Joel has enthusiastically recommended this title and has gladly agreed to join us and share his insights. 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!

We thank those who joined the team on Friday, May 13th; it was fun to work together! We'd love to have MORE involved to create the lunches for Friday, June 10th and onward.

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.

In Christ,

Carrie Mellen, 614-519-9731, carriemellen@icloud.com

Betsy Sebastian, 219-208-5602, grammyseb@gmail.com

Mona Connolly, 614-886-4413, or mrc2208@sbcglobal.net

**Join the Team
Creating
175 Sack Lunches
for the**

**OPEN SHELTER
on Parsons Ave.**

**on the 2nd Friday of
EVERY
month from
8:15 to 9:10**

**Contact:
Betsy Sebastian
Mona Connolly
Carrie Mellen**



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

*If you'd like to get involved in creating or serving this month's meal,
please contact Betsy Sebastian immediately;
she is coordinating the work of the Board of Deacons who are providing the meal for the
community of Hoge this month on Saturday, May 21.*

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 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) 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.

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.](#)

