

Weekly Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church - December 28, 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



"How God Shows Up"
by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Witnessing my son's birth transformed how I tell the Christmas story. Now, it is far more personal and vulnerable. There's joy to be sure, but only on the far side of fear and trembling, blood, sacrifice, and tears. This is how God shows up. You see before new life can come into the world, first, a body is broken, and blood is shed. That didn't begin at the Last Supper. It's been part of the cycle of life and death from the very beginning, and the story of Christmas is the story of God entering into that cycle, thus making all of it holy.

Luke doesn't tell us much about what the birth of Jesus was like, but simply that it happened: "The time came for Mary to have her baby. She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger." It all sounds so easy, doesn't it? Our nativity scenes make everything look rustic and cozy, but no birth is cozy, nor easy. Each of us are born into this world through the great pain and sacrifice of our mothers. To be born is a gift, one that came at a great cost, and what makes that cost worthwhile is one simple word, a word that is both overused and unappreciated, a word that appears so weak, yet has the power to move the world. That word is love. What makes the cost of birth worthwhile is love. Love never comes to us without pain or sacrifice. But the pain and the sacrifice are worth it, for nothing matters more in our life than love.

Christ is born into our world of pain, sorrow, and joy, making all of it holy. God willingly and gladly enters this world through great sacrifice, so everyone might know themselves to be loved and to belong here. You were born into this world through great pain and sacrifice, all because you are loved. You are loved by God more than you know, and you belong here. I pray that you sleep in the heavenly peace of knowing you are forever held by the love of God. Merry Christmas!

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](#).

LAST WEEK'S SERVICE (SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25)

Youtube: https://youtu.be/69o6p4Je_0

Facebook: <https://fb.watch/hFmuEKJe8O/>

Faithlife: <https://amber-embed.faithlife.com/shares/ynyxZRNewGMxoF1g>

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL AGES!

Adult Forum Class - Adult Christian education resumes Sunday, January 8, 2023 prior to the Sunday worship service at 9am-9:50am in the Lounge. Rev. Joel will be teaching a class entitled "Celtic Christianity: An Integrated Faith." The class will be following John Philip Newell's book *Christ of the Celts: The Healing of Creation* <https://a.co/d/j7HJcbe> Learn how this ancient faith can heal humanity and all creation.

Children Christian Education - Class resumes Sunday, January 8, 2023 - Ages 3 years to 5th grade meet Sundays at 9am in room 115 for music, stories, crafts and conversation.

Youth Group: Group resumes Sunday, January 8, 2023 - Youth grades 6-12 meet Sundays at 11am in room 115 for lunch, learning and a whole lot of fun.



Deep Gratitude for your pledges!
If you haven't pledged, please do so to help us meet the goal to...

RAISE THE HARVEST HOME LOAN RETIREMENT PLEDGE

Thank you, Covenant members! Thanks to many generous pledges, as of late December, we've cracked 90% of our goal of \$270,000 for the *Raise the Harvest Home, Loan Retirement Appeal*! Thank you for your financial support to retire this loan for repairs to our roof and HVAC system in only three years.

If you haven't pledged yet, please do so.

Consider this: If households donate an average of \$500 per year for three years, we'll be able to retire the loan

quickly and minimize the interest payments. Prayerfully consider the impact of Covenant's ministries on your household and our community. Maintaining our church home helps us continue and grow our mission to be a..... *Welcoming, accepting community sharing the Glory of God's love with all!*

In Gratitude,

Rev. Joel A Esala, Charlie Bergmann, John Griffin, Cathy Levy, Dana Rudmose, and Betsy Sebastian

SOS FOOD PANTRY 2022 RESULTS

We made 44% more deliveries and served 50% more people than in 2021!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

221 Deliveries Made
778 People Served
275 Children
503 Adults

Your Contributions are Greatly Appreciated!

Peanut/Cashew Brittle Sales and Thanks



Gail Griffin and Nan Davidson would like to let you know we have a few cans of peanut brittle (\$10) and cashew brittle (\$12) for sale. Please call the church office (614-451-6677) to reserve your cans. We will continue to sell until they are gone.

A big thank you to the following members for helping out in making and selling peanut and cashew brittle these past few months: Elizabeth Baker, Connie Bergmann, Louise Davidson, Andrea Eberhard, Marilyn Hall, Lynn Hamilton, Terri Hayes, Karen Hjelm, Susan Imel, Marcia Keim, Connie Kennedy, Terry Kennedy-Mancini, Gerlinde Lott, Barbara Marshall, Jay McLean, Jude McLean, Abbi Menke, Bonnie Beth Mitchell, Joann Pratt, Lind Pratt, Sandy Pritz, Diana Sanders, Estelle Scott, Betsy Sebastian, Sandy Sickles, Sandy St. Martin, Susan Westberg, and Nan Winslow.

We completed 185 cans of peanut brittle and 72 cans of cashew brittle for a total of 257 cans. We would like to thank Todd and Jill Cameron who continue to donate the cashews in loving memory of his mother Dee Cameron and to Jude and Jay McLean for donating a box of peanut brittle. Added thanks to all of you who brought in sugar, margarine, and coffee cans, and to those who have bought brittle for gifts or for your own enjoyment. Please remember to continue to bring your empty 1 lb. coffee cans to the kitchen all year long. Thanks to each and every one of you for making this a fun time and for helping make money for Covenant Mission.

DONATE METAL WATER BOTTLES for those who visit the OPEN SHELTER

Let us extend onward into the new year our stainless steel water bottle collection! One of the opportunities to give this Christmas Season included providing *stainless steel water bottles including*

Donate metal WATER BOTTLES with a loop
for people who visit the
OPEN SHELTER on Parsons Ave



loops so people who visit the Open Shelter can attach them with a carabiner clip to their backpacks or belt loops. They can use more, so let's keep taking them to the Open Shelter! Reach out to **Cathy Levy** with your questions; she answers a few of them, below:

Question: Why stainless steel?

Answer: We've learned that stainless steel bottles are healthier to drink from; also, they are easier to clean.

Question: What do you mean by "loops"?

Answer: See the picture; each bottle's lid includes a sturdy loop for hooking your fingers through or hooking a carabiner hook through.

Question: What is a carabiner hook?

Answer: These are popular with rock climbers and hikers; these are metal loops with spring-loaded gates used to quickly and reversibly connect components. In this case, with the loop on a water bottle, a carabiner hook helps you attach the bottle to your belt loop or backpack strap (see the picture).

Question: Must we donate a carabiner hook too?

Answer: No, we'll buy boxes full of those and add them to each water bottle to make it convenient for all. If you do decide to donate hooks, make sure they are sturdy with a strong spring.

Question: Where do I put my donation of bottles?

Answer: Put them in the marked bin in Covenant's Donation Center, which is in the coat closet closest to the main entrance to the sanctuary.

Question: When will you take them to the Open Shelter?

Answer: For decades, we take 175 sacked lunches to the Open Shelter on the second Friday of the month. Included in these deliveries, we bring drinks, including bottled water. We're wondering if high quality stainless steel water bottles will reduce the demand for bottled water, thus improving the impact on the environment. **So, we are continuing our request for more donations of these bottles. We will take them with our monthly delivery of the lunches.**

The Open Shelter is an Advocacy Center & Day Services Shelter for homeless and marginally-housed people in Central Ohio.



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Covenant Presbyterian Women's Circles meet for fellowship and discussion of the Horizons Bible Study "Celebrating Sabbath, Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight"

- 1st Monday at 7:00 pm, Elizabeth Circle, Mona Connolly, moderator via Zoom
- 1st Wednesday at 9:30 am in the Church Lounge, Eunice-Lydia Circle, Susan Imel, moderator
- 3rd Monday, at 9:30 am in the church lounge, Deborah Circle, Lynn Elliott, moderator

Other circles:

- Every Thursday at 1:00 p.m. Mission Sewing, Diana Sanders
- 2nd and 4th Fridays at 9:30 a.m. in the Church Lounge, Prayer Shawl Circle, 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 not meet on January 6th, but will continue discussion of Brian McLaren's book, *Do I Stay Christian?* on January 20th. They will review chapter 18 and discuss the new reading of chapters 19, 20, and 21. New participants are always welcome. Meetings are held on Zoom, so check with Susan Imel or Louise Davidson for information and to join the discussion, usually the first and third Friday each month from 9:30 to 11 am.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT & ADULT LEARNING COMMISSION

Wednesday Bible Study 1:00-2:00 pm: There will be no Bible study this Wednesday, 12/28. We will continue our study of the book of John on 1/4/2023.

Wednesday Evening Book Study 7:00-8:00 p.m.- Our next CPC book group meeting will be a continuation of our study of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A good number of respondents agreed that they would be more available to participate in our book group if we met only once per month, so **we will next meet on Wednesday, January 4 at 7:00 by Zoom**. Our title is '[A Country Between](#)', written by Stephanie Saldaña. Click on the blue link to get to Amazon. There are copies available at the public library as well. Please contact the church or Tori Vazquez for the link.



Covenant Christmas
GIFT GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Help share
the glory of
God's Love!

For the complete list, go to
covenantpcusa.org

LIST OF CHRISTMAS GIFT GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

At Covenant Presbyterian Church, we always find ways to share the glory of God's love, especially at Christmas time.

*Thank you, Covenant, for supporting SO MANY of these ministries already!
What a demonstration of living out our call to share the Glory of God's love with all!*

To learn about how to participate in the remaining giving opportunities of the season (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 the first page of the church's website, www.covenantpcusa.org.

Remaining Ministries to Serve this season include:

1. Food Boxes for Families from MWA (Karen Hjelm, Food sort and deliveries: Fri., Dec 23)

2. Water Bottles for those served by the Open Shelter (Cathy Levy, Extending collection)
3. Christmas Joy Offering (Beth Askue)
4. Deacons' Christmas Eve Offering (Bonnie James)

Thank you for considering an opportunity to practice our faith and humanity in service of others in this Holy Season!



SPIRITUAL CINEMA

Wednesday, 12/28, we will gather in the Lounge, at 6:30 pm to watch Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris (2022): a widowed cleaning lady in 1950s London falls madly in love with a couture Dior dress, and decides that she must have one of her own. We will stay for a short time after the film to discuss its merits and message. Come join us.

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!

Many thanks to the smaller team who worked on the morning of 12/9 to help assemble and deliver the lunches. We were focused, and we managed to pull it off in time. Whew! We'd love to have more helpers next month!

*Join us! You could help by shopping, pre-assembling, preparing on Friday morning, and/or delivering on Friday morning (see below for details). Our next delivery date is **Friday, January 13th** or you can help in any future month. **We particularly need help with SHOPPING at this point in the year, as some of our top shoppers take winter vacations. Let us know if you can help; it's fun, and shopping can fit into your schedule that week.***

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

- Anytime, donate **sturdy, stainless-steel water bottles with a loop** that participants can use to carry water easily. Drop your donations off in the marked bin within Covenant's Donation Center, which is in the coat closet nearest the sanctuary. We're hoping to provide more safe, cleanable water bottles to reduce the impact on the environment of disposable water bottles and to support a sustainable future.
- Anytime, you could **drop off your clean, lidded take-out containers** (reusable disposable food containers) to shelving on the 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, Tanvi Bhowmik. 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 8:00 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 larger hatchback car or 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 at covenant@covenantpcusa.org.

In Christ,
Betsy Sebastian, Mona Connolly, and Carrie Mellen



**Join the team creating
175 Sack Lunches for the
OPEN SHELTER
on Parsons Ave.
on the 2nd Friday of every month
from 8:00 to 9:10**

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



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

*Many thanks to the chefs and servers from Elizabeth Circle
and Nan Winslow, David Connolly and Bob Tullet who served on 12/17.*

Many thanks to EVERYONE who donated items for the gift table.

The Christmas Party was joyous, and everyone left with spirits and tummies full!

*The next meal will be served by volunteers of the SOS Food Pantry
on Saturday, January 21st.
To help as a chef or as a server from 4-7pm, please contact Mark Owen.*

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. The wearing of masks is optional for both servers and guests.

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

- **We're opening up the Signups for 2023! Please sign up as an individual or as a group. We need help starting February 18th and every 3rd Saturday thereafter.**
- In the past, Covenant members cooked in their own homes and then brought 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 and June, teams prepared most 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 and for January 21, 2023... **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, Tanvi Bhowmik.
- **If you or your kids would like to help out as a chef 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.

Signup 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.

SIGN UP as an Individual or Group for a 3rd Sat. in 2023 to be the hand of Christ in Love and Hospitality cooking and/or serving home-cooked food for our neighbors at HM3/Hoge Memorial Pres. Church

Contact: Cathy Levy or use
bitly.com/CovenantHM3SignUp

**Worried about what to cook for 50?
Ask Cathy for a list of the last 17 menus
which included these Main Dishes:**



**BBQ Chicken, Beef, Pulled Pork Sandwiches,
Beef Stew, Chicken Tetrazinni, Johnny Marzetti,
Meatloaf, Sliced Ham, Sliced Turkey**



Presbyterian Disaster Assistance – Ukraine and Hurricane Relief

Your financial support and partnership enables Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) to bring hope to communities and individuals recovering from natural and human-caused disaster situations. God's people are called on to stand

in the "GAP" – Give. Act. Pray. Give to a disaster/relief effort of your choice by designating the Disaster Response "DR" project you would like to support. View the list of [Active Disaster Responses](#) (includes links to give online)



SANCTUARY FLOWERS

You may 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 but must be received prior to the specific date of worship service.



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

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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