



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

From our pastor

"And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God's Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from the heavens said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'" Matthew 3:16-17

Every year, the first Sunday after the Epiphany is Baptism of the Lord Sunday, where we return to the Jordan River and witness the truth of Jesus' identity made manifest. That's what an epiphany is, a moment of revealing, in which a previously hidden truth is laid bare. An epiphany doesn't create the truth. It reveals an already existing truth, and that's exactly what we see in Jesus' baptism. He hears that he is God's beloved son, in whom God is well pleased. Of course, baptism didn't make Jesus God's beloved son. It simply revealed what was already true. To this point, Jesus hasn't healed or taught anyone. God's approval comes preloaded. The words Jesus hears in his baptism are not a reward for a job well done. They are the foundation upon which Jesus will do his job well.

This is my favorite story in all of scripture. It has captivated me in the hope that God says these same words over me and over you. That's our baptismal journey, to trust that what God says about Jesus in his baptism, God says over each one of us as well. The great struggle of our lives is trusting that you are the beloved of God, not because of something you've done or believe, but simply because you exist. You might even call it our one struggle to love. Mr. Rogers once said, "Love isn't a state of perfect caring. It is an active noun, like struggle. To love someone is to strive to accept that person exactly the way he or she is, right here and now." That's the struggle we are all in—to accept others exactly as they are, not how we wished they were or think they should be. That's what love is, total acceptance of who we are, which is exactly what Jesus hears in his baptism.

Baptism doesn't create the truth, but instead reveals an already existing truth, that we are the beloved of God, not because of something we'd done or something we believe, but simply because we exist. That it turns out is enough. This is the good news from all eternity. The love you are searching for is already yours. It comes preloaded. Remember this good news spoken in both water and word, that you are and always have been the beloved of God.

One Struggle to Love,
Rev. Joel A. Esala

**COVENANT'S SUNDAY 10:00 A.M. INDOOR, IN-PERSON
WORSHIP SERVICE**



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, JANUARY 15)

Youtube: <https://youtu.be/sgTP-olV5-g>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/870875934063057/>

Faithlife: <https://faithlife.com/cpc-vj/files?filter=kind%3A%22video%22>

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL AGES!

Adult Forum Class - Sundays from 9am-9:50am in the Lounge. Rev. Joel is 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: Ages 3 years to 5th grade meet Sundays at 9am in room 115 for music, stories, crafts and conversation.

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



Almost There!
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 early January, **only \$10,000 remains** to reach our \$270,000 goal 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.

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

Men's Fellowship in January 2023!

On Saturday, Jan. 21, the Covenant men's fellowship group will convene at First Watch at Kingsdale for breakfast at 8 a.m.

C.A.R.E.S.

Covenant Deacons have a service for Covenant members to give rides to those who need transportation to an appointment, or to something else you deem necessary. Please call the church office (614-451-6677) to request a ride and one of us will get in contact with you. Thank you.

ANNUAL PRESBYTERY LEADERSHIP TRAINING DAY (P.I.E.)

Our annual presbytery leadership training day called P.I.E. (**Partners in Education**) will be held at Covenant this year on Saturday, January 21. We are in need of volunteers who are **not** current elders or deacons, as those folks will be participants in the training sessions. If you can give an hour or a little more, tasks include: set up on Friday night, Saturday greeters, hallway guides, pie cutters, lunch or coffee servers, and clean up, please [sign up here](#). There will be a paper sign up sheet available on Sunday, before and after church.



DONATE METAL WATER BOTTLES for those who visit the OPEN SHELTER

Thank you for donating stainless steel water bottles with sturdy carrying loops for the people who visit 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 "sturdy carrying 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: A metal loop with a spring-loaded gate used to quickly and reversibly connect components. In this case, with the loop on a water bottle, a carabiner hook helps people attach the bottle's loop to their 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. The availability of high quality stainless steel water bottles will reduce the demand for bottled water, thus improving the impact on the environment. Reusable bottles are preferred by many over disposable! We 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 (CPW), would like to say thank-you to all the Covenant members who made pledges to CPW, and for purchasing Peanut Brittle, cookies, baked goods, and items the sewing circle made! You made it possible for CPW to make over \$11,000 to give to WorldWide and local mission and to CPW and CPC projects. Thank you!

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 Tuesday 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.

CPW GARAGE SALE

Set-up Monday – Thursday, April 24-27

Sale Friday and Saturday, April 28-29. There is NO STORAGE space to store early donations.

We are limiting items; the following items ARE ACCEPTED:

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS: dishes, mugs, glassware

SMALL APPLIANCES: in good working order

SPORTS EQUIPMENT: in good working order

YARD EQUIPMENT: clean and in good working order

CHILDRENS GAMES AND TOYS: in good condition

CHILDRENS CLOTHES (up to age 12) in good condition

FURNITURE, LAMPS, PICTURES, DECORATIVE AND HOLIDAY ITEMS (sorry, no pickup is available for large items)

CRAFT SUPPLIES

The following items WILL NOT be accepted for this Garage Sale. Alternative donation sites given:

ELECTRONICS (tv's, computers, printers, etc.) Recycle at Ohio Mulch, Roberts Rd., Best Buy, or call your electronics dealer, such as MicroCenter

BOOKS Recycle at Half Price Books Bethel Rd. or Ohio Thrift

ADULT CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES: Good will, Volunteers of America etc.

PILLOWS, CURTAINS, SHEETS & TOWELS, same as above.

WOMEN'S THEOLOGY

Members of Women's Theology 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: This Wednesday, 1/18 from 1-2 pm, we will continue our study of the book of John. (You can find an overview of John at bibleproject.com.) This gathering will be in person, in the Lounge. We will continue offering zoom for those who cannot meet in-person. 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.- Thanks to those who were able to attend our discussion of the beautiful book by Stephanie Saldaña, 'A Country Between'. Our February title, 'Apeirogon' by Colum McCann, will continue our focus on the Palestine-Israeli situation. Columbus Metropolitan Library owns 48 copies of this book, and 33 of them are available. The genre is fiction; following is a New York Times link describing the true story upon which it is based: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/review/colum-mccann-apeirogon.html>.

Our next meeting is scheduled for February 8 at 7:00 pm, via Zoom. Please contact the church or Tori Vazquez for the link.

Amazon description: "Bassam Aramin is Palestinian. Rami Elhanan is Israeli. They inhabit a world of intractable conflict that colors every aspect of their daily lives, from the roads they are allowed to drive on, to the schools their daughters, Abir and Smadar, each attend, to the checkpoints, both physical and emotional, they must negotiate. Their worlds shift irreparably after ten-year-old Abir is killed by a rubber bullet and thirteen-year-old Smadar becomes the victim of suicide bombers. When Bassam and Rami learn of each other's stories, they recognize the loss that connects them, and they attempt to use their grief as a weapon for peace."



Spiritual Cinema

Wednesday, 1/25, we will gather in the Lounge at 6:30 pm to watch *The Post* - a 2017 American historical political thriller film (starring Meryl Streep and Tom Hanks) about the Washington Post and the publication of the Pentagon Papers. We will stay for a short time after the film to discuss its merits and message. Come join us.

Do You Know of a Student Seeking Higher Education??

Nurture & Outreach needs your help! If you have a child or a grandchild who is going to College or currently attending higher education classes, we would like to send them a "Box of Goodies" from Covenant. Please send their name, shipping address, any dietary restriction, and their spring break dates in an email to covenant@covenantpcusa.org and in the subject line type Nurture & Outreach/Nancy Davidson by February 6.

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 1272 Genessee Ave. in the Linden area. Volunteers work on the house on Thursday mornings 8:30 until noon and Saturdays from 8:30 to 3:00. Lunch on Saturday is provided. Work on the house will begin on February 4 and will be completed by August 31.

We are in need of men and women volunteers to help with the construction. You can just show up either day at 8:15am 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.

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 team who split up the work to
provide for this community on 1/13!
Special thanks to those who helped in new ways in this new year!

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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 9:10am



Contact:
Betsy
Sebastian,
Mona
Connolly,
Carrie
Mellen



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

*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.

- **Please help us establish the groups who will serve in 2023! Please sign up as an individual or as a group. We need help for these Saturdays: Mar 18, May 20, Jul 15, Aug 19, Sep 16, Oct 21, and Nov 18.**
- 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, June, and December, teams prepared most of the meal in the Covenant Kitchen as a group activity and then brought the food to Hoge.
- Groups have signed up to serve for several of the months of 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

- Our Financial Administrator's, Tanvi Bhowmik, work schedule is Monday-Wednesday 9:30am-4pm.

[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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