

Weekly Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church - February 22, 2023
Laurie Johnson, Office Manager & Newsletter Editor



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

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE - TODAY @ 7:00PM



seeking:
honest questions
for deeper faith

From our pastor

Today is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. Every year, we begin a 40-day journey with Jesus, contemplating our own mortality. For most Christians, Ash Wednesday is a somber day of repentance, focused on sin. For me, Ash Wednesday is about taking stock of life—what am I seeking? How am I spending the limited time I have? Remembering life's finitude makes each day precious, for they are all unrepeatable opportunities to love and be loved.

Our theme this year from [Sanctified Art](#) is "Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith." Between now and Easter, we will be asking questions meant to spur reflection on our values, our habits, our beliefs, and our dreams. The point is not to find the right answer. The point is to ask the right question. In *Letters to a Young Poet*, Rainer Maria Rilke says, "Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer." This Lent, we will be living the questions, trusting that we already have that which we seek—a love that makes us whole. I hope you'll join us for worship tonight at 7pm, in-person or online, as we live the questions together.

Sarah Speed's Poem, "At the Start" is a great place to begin seeking:

Is this the fast I choose?
Will I wake with the sun each morning?

Will I start with thank you?
Will I peel back the cage around my frame to let you in
or will I get too busy? Will my Bible collect dust on the shelf, along with my journal,
along with my sense of self,
or will I roll back the stone and wade in?

Every new season beckons something of us—
attention, beauty, the chance to create.
This season is no different.
So, like moths to the light, will we find our way toward God, or will we hover, circling fake suns?

I am seeking something deeper.
I am kicking off my shoes.
I am starting this season on holy ground.¹

[1] *Prayer by Rev. Sarah Speed / A Sanctified Art LLC / sanctifiedart.org*

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, FEBRUARY 19)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1364028787748131/>

Youtube: <https://youtube.com/live/mqCR6CS65fE?feature=share>

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

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL AGES!

Adult Forum Class - Sundays from 9am-9:45am in the Lounge. Rev. Joel will introduce our Lenten devotional "Seeking."

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.

Children's Ministry Parent Meeting

All parents/caregivers of children 3 years - 5th grade are invited to a meeting on Sunday 2/26 at 9am in the chapel. We will be talking about our vision for children in worship, how parents can help nurture faith in their children and transitions for our older students. There will be time for questions and sharing of ideas so it will be better with you there! Please see Erin with any questions.

PREACHER FROM THE PEW SERVICES

Our Preacher from the Pew Services will start at 7pm on Wed., March 1, in the Sanctuary. You are invited to our annual series where our members will enlighten our Lenten season by presenting their faith journey. Distinguished lay preachers this year are: March 1: Bonnie Beth Mitchell; March 8: Racine Brown; March 15: Dick Lewis; March 22: Josh Battistone; March 29: Gene McEvoy. Please see our display in the hallway.



Preacher from the Pew

Please join us every Wednesday at 7:00pm in Lent for our annual series where our members will enlighten your Lenten season by presenting their faith journey. Read their bios on display in the hallway or on our church website.

- March 1: Bonnie Beth Mitchell
- March 8: Racine Brown
- March 15: Dick Lewis
- March 22: Josh Battistone
- March 29: Gene McEvoy

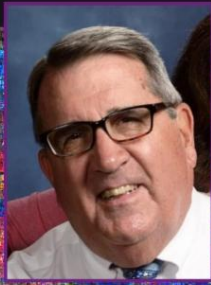
Preacher from the Pew



Bonnie Beth Mitchell
March 1; 7:00PM



Racine Brown
March 8; 7:00PM



Dick Lewis
March 15; 7:00PM



Josh Battistone
March 22; 7:00PM



Gene McEvoy
March 29; 7:00PM

CPW LENTEN BREAKFAST

Mark your calendars for the annual Lenten Breakfast on Saturday, March 18th at 9:30 am sponsored by Covenant Presbyterian Women. Using works from the collection of the Columbus Museum of Art, docents Mary Gahbauer and Anne Peterson will feature art with the themes of Hope and Renewal.

The program will be concluded with communion. There is no charge for the program, but registration to attend is needed. Registrations can be made between services or by contacting the office at 614-451-6677.



**SOS
FOOD
PANTRY**

SOS FOOD PANTRY

THE SOS FOOD PANTRY CONTINUES TO MAKE EMERGENCY FOOD DELIVERIES TO FAMILIES IN NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY. OUR VOLUNTEER DRIVERS ARE HEARING FROM OUR CLIENTS HOW MUCH THEY NEED THE FOOD AND HOW MUCH THEY APPRECIATE IT! OUR SHELVES ARE ABOUT TO BE EMPTIED AND WE ARE IN NEED OF FOOD DONATIONS ONCE AGAIN.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION OF ANY OF THESE ITEMS:

CANNED GREEN BEANS AND CORN
PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY/JAM
BOXED MACARONI & CHEESE
CONDENSED CHICKEN NOODLE AND TOMATO SOUPS
BAKED BEANS
CANNED FRUIT
CEREALS
SPAGHETTI AND SPAGHETTI SAUCE
CANNED TUNA FISH
CANNED BEEF STEW

PLEASE PLACE YOUR DONATIONS IN THE SOS PANTRY DROP OFF BIN INSIDE THE NORTH ENTRANCE.

THANK YOU TO OUR MANY SUPPORTERS AND VOLUNTEERS!



Photo Credit By: FCA Syria

**“God is our refuge and strength ... though the mountains shake.”
- Psalm 46:1-3**

The scale of the disaster facing Syria and Turkey after the Feb. 6 earthquake is becoming clearer. The 7.8-magnitude quake and its aftershocks have left more than 11,000 people dead and thousands more injured; these numbers will rise as search and rescue continues. Buildings have been reduced to rubble, and roads and bridges have been severely damaged, resulting in dangerous conditions for first responders. In some places, such as Aleppo, this destruction is compounding the damage of the now 11-year war in Syria.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is providing emergency relief and short-term recovery in the impacted areas through long-standing partners in Syria, in addition to ACT Alliance members in Syria and Turkey, all of whom are already on the ground. PDA will remain active throughout the entire recovery process, accompanying our partners in the area as they determine long-term program needs and providing financial support for building and resilience.

GIVE. ACT. PRAY.

GIVE:

Financial support for relief efforts can be designated to [DR999999-ST earthquake](#). Gifts can be made [online by clicking here](#), by phone at (800) 872-3283, or by check made payable to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with “[DR999999-ST Earthquake](#)” written on the memo line and mailed to

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.),
P.O. Box 643700,
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

CPC BOOK GROUP

In March, we will have the opportunity to join with Pastor Jacqui Buschor of The Church at Oakland Park (ELCA) and several other churches for a study of Barbara Brown Taylor's 'Learning to Walk in the Dark'. This study will be held on Thursday evenings at 7 pm on Zoom, keeping our Wednesday evenings free for Preacher from the Pew. Here is her description of the book and a link to sign up:

"Jacqui writes: 'This book explores the dichotomies of light and darkness and the spiritual meaning and significance we often attribute to each. Together we'll explore how, though it is easier to see God and goodness in the light, God is equally present and moving in the dark and how the darkness sometimes has unique gifts to offer us that we could never find in light alone. This will be a five week study meeting on Thursday evenings at 7pm beginning March 2nd. [Just fill out the registration form](#) so we can get Zoom information to you and keep you updated in case of changes.'"

Then in April, a field trip! Many thanks to Terry Kennedy-Mancini for calling it to our attention. Matthew Desmond is coming to Columbus to give a talk on Wednesday, April 19 at 7:00 p.m. at CCAD. Matthew Desmond is the author of 'Evicted', which the Book Group read with Dr. Stephanie Pierce. He has a new book coming out, 'Poverty by America', a copy of which is included in the cost of the \$30 ticket. We will meet at the church and carpool-- early dinner before would be an option. Tori Vazquez will order the tickets all at once and

each of you could reimburse, if that would be helpful. Please let me know by Friday, February 17, if you are interested. A link is below if you would prefer to order your own ticket. We will read and discuss our new book in May!

[An Evening with Pulitzer Prize-Winning Author of EVICTED, Matthew Desmond!](#)

Pulitzer Prize-winning and bestselling author, acclaimed sociologist Matthew Desmond, in conversation with WOSU Public Media's Ann Fisher! www.eventbrite.com



DONATE METAL WATER BOTTLES for those who visit the OPEN SHELTER

What: Donate Stainless Steel water bottles with sturdy carrying loops

For Who: The people who visit the Open Shelter on Parsons Ave.

Why: Stainless steel bottles are healthier to drink from and easier to clean. Each bottle's lid should include a sturdy loop for hooking fingers through or hooking a carabiner hook through because folks must carry all their belongings. No need to donate the carabiner hooks; we will buy them by the box and add them to each water bottle before taking them to the Open Shelter.

Where: Place your donations in the marked bin in Covenant's Donation Center, which is in the coat closet closest to the main entrance to the sanctuary.

When will the Open Shelter receive them? For decades, we take 175 sack lunches to the Open Shelter on the second Friday of the month. We also bring drinks, including disposable bottled water. The availability of high quality 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.

Questions? Reach out to **Cathy Levy**.

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 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

The **Prayer Shawl Circle** provides shawls upon request! Over the years we have made and blessed over 1,000 shawls and prayed many other times when those with shawls have needed prayers once again (re blessing them). We would like to remind you shawls are not only for illnesses or death of a family member or a friend. They are for happy occasions – birth of a baby (and great for nursing), weddings, special birthdays, graduations, you name it! They are not only for church members, but for friends far and wide. Two even went to New Zealand! So contact Nancy Davidson or Louise Davidson when you would like a handmade shawl. Many colors and textures are available!

Horizons magazine, a magazine dedicated to Presbyterian women, is currently running a subscription special. Details are in the link below.

<https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-BOGO-Horizons-flier.pdf>

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.

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECT February, 2023

The need for clothing for homeless individuals and families in Central Ohio is greater than ever. CPW has supported Crazy Faith Ministry, founded and led by Rev. Dr. Susan Smith, by providing white socks for men in the past. We would like to broaden our support for this ministry outreach in the following way.

Men

White cotton socks in packages
White underpants in packages
White undershirts in packages

Women

White cotton socks in packages
White or pale underpants in packages
White or pale camisoles in packages
Sanitary supplies

All donations should be new and if not purchased in packages, please leave price tags on and put them in zip lock bags. It is important that we provide new clean items.

We invite the members of the congregation to participate as they wish. This project will begin Sunday, February 5th and conclude on Sunday, February 26th. There will be a large box in the atrium marked CPW Crazy Faith Ministry donations.

If you have any questions, please contact Ann Teske by phone 614-302-9609 (or text). Thank you for your generous support.

Ann Teske, Chair
Involvement and Action

WOMEN'S THEOLOGY

Members of Women's Theology will meet on March 3 to read the last chapters in the Brian McLaren's book, *Do I Stay Christian?* 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, the first and third Fridays each month from 9:30am to 11am.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT & ADULT LEARNING COMMISSION

- **Wednesday Bible Study 1:00-2:00 pm:** This Wednesday, February 22, from 1-2 pm, we will revert to the study of John. 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 22 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."



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).

DID YOU KNOW?

Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked worldwide – including right here in the United States. It can happen in any community and victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality. Traffickers might use the following methods to lure victims into trafficking situations:

- Violence
- Manipulation
- Romantic relationships
- False promises of well-paying jobs

JOIN THE TEAM creating Sack Lunches serving

clients from the OPEN SHELTER

Want to help your neighbor? Are you short on time but big in heart?
Check out these opportunities to join our team! Call us; maybe one of these tasks will fit your schedule.
If yes, great! If not, thanks for considering it!
We want to involve YOU!

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**. *Our next delivery date is Friday, March 10th 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.*

Here are ways to join in:

- Anytime, donate **sturdy, stainless-steel water bottles with a loop** (see the e-newsletter article for details)
- 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.
- Help with supplies! (Costs may be reimbursed by submitting your receipts to our Financial Administrator, Tanvi Bhowmik.)
 - **Shop** for supplies (like paper bags, or napkins, or drinks, or plastic bags, or sandwich makings, or bananas...)
 - **Pre-assemble** at your home (45 or 90 bags of unsalted nuts, or 45 or 90 bags of baby carrots, or 30 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches)
- Join the **Lunch-assembling team at Covenant's kitchen** (help make 160 ham and cheese sandwiches, 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**).
- **Deliver** the lunches and other supplies from Covenant to the Open Shelter on Parsons Ave. by **9:30**. 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.

Questions? Interested? 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 serving clients
from the:
OPEN SHELTER on Parsons Ave.



Help as a shopper, early in the month,
delivering items to Covenant

Help as a pre-assembler,
and deliver by the 2nd Fri., 8am, to Covenant

Help the Lunch-assembling team
on the 2nd Friday from 8:00 to 9:10 am

Help deliver to the Open Shelter, loading up
on the 2nd Fri. starting at 8am, delivering by 9:30

Contact:
Betsy Sebastian, Mona Connolly, Carrie Mellen



JOIN THE GROUPS serving a
home-cooked meal with open
hearts for the Franklinton
community through HOGE'S
MUSIC, MESSAGE, MEAL

Want to help your neighbor? Can you help from 4-7pm on a 3rd Saturday?
Check this out! It's fun, easy, and important! We want to involve YOU!

Many thanks to the Deacons who served on 2/18!
There was plenty for all, including the servers from Covenant!

The next meal will be prepared and served by the
Mission and Social Concerns Commission on Saturday, March, 18.
To help as a chef or as a server from 4-7pm, please contact Cathy Levy.

Hoge Presbyterian Church offers the HM3 program every Saturday for its community in Franklinton including Music, Message, and a free Meal. Area churches assist with the Meal, and Covenant creates and serves a hot, home-made meal every 3rd Saturday.

- **Please help us establish the groups who will serve in 2023!** Sign up as an individual or as a group. We need help for these Saturdays: **Aug 19, Sep 16, Oct 21.**
- 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:** Consider cooking at home, or consider cooking at Covenant together, as a group (it's fun)! In any case, your team will transport food to Hoge to be kept warm (or cold) until serving time. Costs 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 a 3rd Saturday where a group already is signed up, **go ahead and contact that groups' leader;** they would be **THRILLED** to have help! You can find the leader's name on the website, or 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 a group to share God's love with our neighbors in Franklinton as a chef or server through the HM3 program at Hoge Memorial Presbyterian Church

Contact Cathy Levy or use:

bitly.com/CovenantHM3SignUp



Wondering what to cook for 50? Ask Cathy for a list of the last 21 menus including these meaty main dishes:

*BBQ Chicken, Beef, or Pulled Pork Sandwiches,
Beef Stew, Chicken Tetrazinni, Johnny Marzetti,
Oven-Baked Chicken & Rice, Meatloaf
Sliced Ham, Sliced Turkey*



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 Mike Davis. 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

- Wishing Cherie Brooks a very happy February birthday!
- Our Financial Administrator's, Tanvi Bhowmik, work schedule is Tuesday-Thursday 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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