

Weekly Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church - March 1, 2023

Laurie Johnson, Office Manager & Newsletter Editor



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



From our pastor

Every year on the first Sunday of Lent, we follow Jesus to the wilderness where he is tempted by the devil. Right on the heels of his baptism, where Jesus hears those precious words, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased," the Spirit leads Jesus to a place where his identity is tested. Who will he listen to? There is no greater test that any of us will face than the test of our identity. Who do you think you are? Are you a beloved child of God, or are you on your own, alone in a cold cosmos? This is the test that Jesus faces, as do we.

In all the temptations Jesus faces, he resists, where we yield. Whether it is indulging our bodily impulses, thinking God will protect us from harm, or the temptation to seize power by corrupt means, in various ways, we've all failed the test. The point of this story is not that Jesus resisted temptation, and you should too. The point of this story is that because Jesus passed the test, it's safe for us to fail. That's the good news. We are all tested in various ways throughout our lives, and the point is not so much learning how to resist temptation as much as it is learning how to deal with our failure. Because we all fail, not just once but time and again. But here's the good news—in God's family it's safe to fail. Just like Jesus, we are God's beloved children too. Our failure doesn't change that. Nothing can change that.

Who you listen to shapes your life. Like us Jesus was surrounded by voices telling him who he is, yet he listened to the one voice that mattered, the voice that said he is God's beloved Son. Who will you listen to?

However you choose to recognize Lent, whether you fast or pray, whether you fail or succeed, may you know what Jesus knew, that you are and will always remain God's beloved.

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 26)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1338009346992271/>

YouTube: <https://youtube.com/live/roUnCEzmAMk?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. Presentation on Welcoming & Inclusion Task Force.

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.

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

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!

CHILDREN'S CENTER NEWS



Now enrolling for Summer Camps
and the 2023 - 2024 School Year!

Summer Preschool Camp (ages 3 – 5)

This 4-hour camp is for children ages 36 months through 5 years old who have not yet attended kindergarten. Children must be potty trained and 3 years old by the start of their session. Camp starts at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 1:00 p.m. Children should eat breakfast before attending camp. Parents must provide a packed snack or lunch.

Focus on Fundamentals Sports Minicamp (ages 6 – 9)

Focus on Fundamentals is more than a sports camp. While campers work on basic moves and strategies that will increase their fun and enjoyment of sports, they also receive positive coaching on collaboration, teamwork, and how to build good relationships. The daily 2-hour schedule includes a team meeting, warmups (calisthenics, stretching), skill drills, special games, snack from home (fuel up), game time (play the game!), and a closing huddle-up. Enrollment is limited to 12 children per day.

2023 – 2024 School Year Programs

CDO for toddlers, Preschool, Pre-K, and After School (grades K-5)

Visit our webpage at
<https://covenantpcusa.org/childrens-center>
for program details and application forms

Questions? Contact Caroline at childcenter@covenantpcusa.org or 614-451-7172

**RAISE THE HARVEST HOME
LOAN RETIREMENT PLEDGE**

End of Drive! THANK YOU!

Thank you, Covenant members! Your combined donations and pledges totaled slightly less than our original goal. Yet, the cost of the two projects (repairs to our roof and HVAC system) came in below what we anticipated. So, your pledges, once received as donations, will cover the entirety of this loan!

*The Hymn, "Come ye thankful people come; raise the song of harvest home",
Continues: "God our maker doth provide for our wants to be supplied"*

Thanks to your generosity, our wants (needs!) have been supplied. For that, we give thanks to God!

Thank you for investing in your church home! Thank you for your investment so we all can live out our mission as an..... *Accepting, welcoming 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



**Covenant Presbyterian Women was joined by
Covenant congregation to create a very
successful community outreach project for
Crazy Faith Ministries for the Homeless
February 5-25, 2023**

**Rev. Dr. Susan Smith asked for new underwear as the greatest
need. We responded!**

Men

200 pairs of white socks
82 white tee shirts
110 briefs

Women

74 pairs of socks
68 camisoles
156 briefs
4 grocery bags of sanitary supplies

Thank you to all for your caring and generosity.

Ann Teske, Chair
Involvement and Action
Covenant Presbyterian Women



**“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.

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 from 1-2 pm, we will continue 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."

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!

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

- 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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