



Covenant Connection

July 6, 2020 | Bi-Weekly Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church

Connect *with the* Pastor



With the reopening of some churches as we move from phase 2 to phase 3 in Virginia, several folks have inquired when we might resume some form of in-person worship here at Covenant. At its June meeting, Session approved the recommendation of the Worship Team with the guidance of the COVID-19 Task Force to continue with only virtual worship services through Labor Day consistent with these guiding principles:

- ◆ Safety of our people is our first priority
- ◆ Follow the science utilizing CDC, VDH, Governor's Office recommendations
- ◆ Just because we CAN do something does not mean we SHOULD do something
- ◆ Resume activities slowly with an eye toward any resurgence of the virus or other factors which might mitigate proceeding more quickly or more slowly
- ◆ Utilize testing and tracing as available
- ◆ The work of the church continues outside the walls of the church through intentional, creative, non-traditional engagement

Back in May I shared with you the restrictions that the guidelines place upon us, and they are substantially unchanged. As I wrote at that time:

We could have at most 60-65 people in worship at a time. There would be no congregational singing, no children's programming, no communion, and no choir. Pews would be emptied of all Bibles and hymnals. All those attending would be required to wear a face covering and to maintain the recommended six feet of social distancing. There could be no fellowship time before or after the service, and the flow of foot traffic in and out of the sanctuary would be strictly limited. Any service would be short (no complaints there I am sure) so that restrooms would be less likely to be used. Pews and all touch surfaces would have to be disinfected before and after the service.

In order to limit the number of folks attending to the 60-65 allowed, we would have a sign up for worship ahead of time so that we could assign seating to meet the social distancing

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Connect *with the* Pastor (continued)

requirements. The time of the service would be different from our 10:30 worship as we want to continue to offer virtual worship via Facebook Live that includes singing and the Lord's Supper; we are averaging 90-150 connecting on Sunday mornings with a total of 300-500 viewing the service or a portion thereof at later times, including many new friends and neighbors from around our community and across the nation! Regardless of when we resume worship in person, virtual participation will continue!

With the recent resurgence of the virus in so many states (though thankfully not in Virginia) and the challenges of conducting meaningful worship in-person, we continue to believe that delaying in-person worship is how we can most faithfully care for one another while worshipping virtually and looking for opportunities to gather as we are able. The Worship Team and Session will take another look at options in August. In the meantime, please join us for worship via Facebook Live as we all look forward to that day when we can gather again side-by-side to worship God. What a joyful day that will be!



Items for the next newsletter are due to Martha by **9:00 AM on Friday, July 17th**. Please email her at: covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com



Thank You!



Hats off to Frances Clark and Martha Pierce for their great contributions to the Covenant Connection this past year. They have been reporting the activities of our congregation's Presbyterian Women, from our Christmas baskets, Blanket Sunday, and Health Kits, to our Birthday and Thank Offering meals. Their articles are always informative and entertaining, and a great big thank you goes out to Frances and Martha for all their hard work!

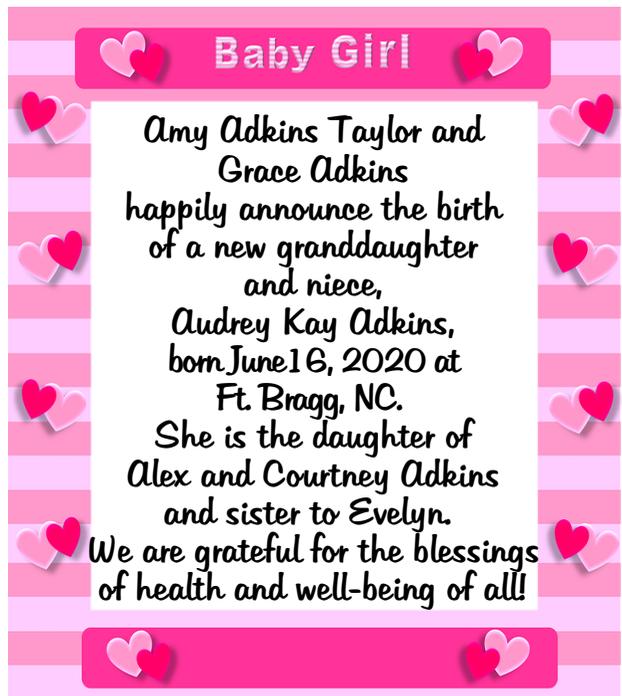
— Carolyn Hensley, co-moderator of Presbyterian Women

Many thanks to our church family for the cards and outpouring of sympathy during this sad time. We felt the love!

— David and Janet Surratt

Baby Girl

Amy Adkins Taylor and Grace Adkins happily announce the birth of a new granddaughter and niece, Audrey Kay Adkins, born June 16, 2020 at Ft. Bragg, NC. She is the daughter of Alex and Courtney Adkins and sister to Evelyn. We are grateful for the blessings of health and well-being of all!



ELDER NOMINATION INFORMATION

Once again the time has come for nominations for a new session class. This time of the year always reminds me of the questions I had when I first began attending here. Questions like what is the difference between an elder and a session member, what are the qualifications to serve, the duties and responsibilities of those serving, and the process of selection. For those new to Covenant and others who may have questions, perhaps the following will be helpful.

All session members are elders who have been called by God to serve, approved by vote of the congregation, undergone elder training, been examined by session, and ordained and installed in a worship service. Elders serve a three-year term and may serve multiple terms on session. Many in this congregation have served two, three or more terms on session.

Serving as an elder is not like being on a local community board or in a fraternal organization; rather, it is a *calling*, and once ordained, an elder is an elder for life. The skills, traits, and qualifications required of elders are clearly stated in the Book of Order. The wording reads in part, "...those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world."

Nominees must be church members.

As one would expect, there are duties and responsibilities attached to being on session. In part, session members attend monthly stated meetings and occasional called meetings, they serve on one or more session teams, welcome new members, visit congregants, approve requests for baptisms and weddings, and generally involve themselves in the life of the church. Session members should be attuned to the tenor of the church and be an ear to those congregants who may have questions or concerns. By their manner of life elders are the face of the church in the community.

The selection of elders is a multi-step process that involves the congregation, the session and the nominating committee; that committee consists of the clerk of session who acts as chair and members elected by the congregation. Each serves a two-year term with two rotating off and two coming on annually. The pastor is an ex-officio member. Elder nomination forms are placed in Sunday worship bulletins and in the newsletter. At the close of the nomination period, in a prayerful discernment process, the committee then reaches out to nominees and prepares a slate of candidates to be approved at a called congregational meeting. The committee always pays close attention to maintaining a gender, age, and experience balance. Once approved by the congregation, the elders-elect participate in a training period and are examined by the session. The final step is ordination and installation. Any church member who feels the call of the Holy Spirit to serve may self-nominate.

The hope is that this piece may clarify for some folks what seemed to be a bit of a mystery to me and serve as a brief refresher for others giving thought to who God may be calling to serve here at Covenant at this time.

(Nomination Form on following page)

NOMINATIONS FOR ELDERS

Our Book of Order tells us this about the office of Elder:

As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in governing and ministry. Ruling Elders are chosen by the people. Together with Teaching Elders (Ministers of the Word and Sacrament), they exercise leadership, governance, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibility for the life of a congregation, as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. They serve faithfully as members of the Session and should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel, both within the church and in the world. Additionally, the church makes provision for youth who may be called to serve as youth elders to serve a one-year term, if so called.

* * * * *

The Nominating Committee is seeking names to be considered for Elder. If you know of someone you feel would be qualified to serve, please write his or her name below and turn in this form by dropping it off at church in the designated box located in the lower vestibule area at the church office by July 28th. Alternatively you may email the name(s) to Martha Pierce at covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com.

ELDER NOMINATIONS

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

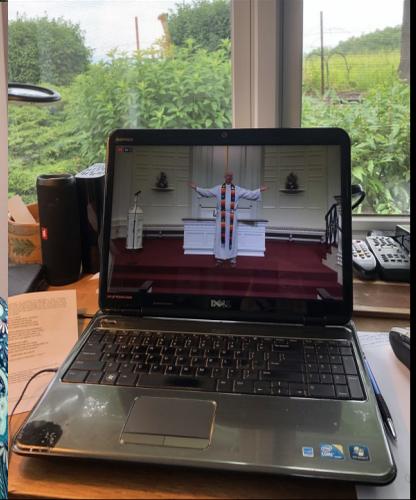


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>12</p> <p>10:30 AM Live Stream Worship Service on Covenant's Facebook Page</p> <p>4:00 PM Youth Meeting via Zoom</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Covenant Connection Published</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>13</p> <p>8:30 AM Camp Covenant</p>	<p>14</p> <p>8:30 AM Camp Covenant</p> <p>7:30 PM Stewardship & Finance Team</p>	<p>15</p> <p>8:30 AM Camp Covenant</p>	<p>16</p> <p>8:30 AM Camp Covenant</p> <p>8:30 AM Executive Team</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9:00AM Items due for Newsletter</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>10:30 AM Live Stream Worship Service on Covenant's Facebook Page</p> <p>4:00 PM Youth Meeting via Zoom</p> <p>7:00 PM STATED SESSION MEETING</p>
<p>20</p> <p>7:00 PM COVID-19 Task Force</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>Covenant Connection Published</p>

JULY 2020



Worship
with us
from home!



OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY



Do you have any old musical instruments taking up space in your home? Here's a chance to clean house and help enrich the lives of some young people. The Outreach Team has agreed to participate with the prison ministry of Emmanuel Episcopal in Staunton and collect used musical instruments which will be donated for the use of residents at the Bon Air or Shenandoah Valley Juvenile Detention Centers. Please leave your instruments in the office vestibule by **July 15**.

ALL types of instruments are welcome, but especially guitars, ukuleles and keyboards.

Worship Service at 10:30 am each Sunday

Live Streaming

www.facebook.com/pg/Covenant-Presbyterian-Church-163891301309/videos/

OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Project Grows —

Working hard to ensure food security for our community during COVID-19, they have experienced an excess of available remote volunteer work for college students who have free time. If you are interested in helping Project Grows while building your resume, they would love to have you. Information regarding those opportunities can be found here: www.projectgrows.org/get-involved/internships-jobs/. Should you have any questions regarding those volunteer opportunities, contact Nichole Barrows at nichole@projectgrows.org. Project Grows also is helping bring local purveyors and our community together by selling online. To shop Project Grows produce and those they support, go to: projectgrows.luluslocalfood.com.

Boys and Girls Club —

We continue to participate in the Nextrex Program, collecting plastic bags for a park bench. 500 pounds = 1 bench. Should you wish to help, collect at home to turn in when the church is open, or weigh your bags, report the weight to Robyn and take them to your local Food Lion.

Shelburne Project —

We continue to collect toiletry items and non-perishable food items for Shelburne Middle School families. Collection boxes are located at the church in the vestibule by the office.

Face Masks for a Local Church —

We would like to help First Presbyterian Church in Waynesboro collect masks to distribute to the families they serve through their food pantry. If you are able to contribute, please drop masks off in the drop-off box located in the church vestibule. Please let Kathy Henderson know or if you are able to help or if you have any questions! (covenantnurse@gmail.com) Information on how to make a face mask can also be found here: patchworkplus-quilting.com/facemasks.

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2001 N. Coalter Street, Staunton, VA 24401

www.covenantpresstaunton.org

Office 540-885-2138 = Fax 540-885-4399

Office hours: Monday-Thursday 8:15AM-3:15PM,
Friday 8:15AM-12:15PM



MINISTERIAL & PROGRAM STAFF

John C. Peterson

Pastor

Sarah Wolf

Associate Pastor

Laura Lawson

Director of Youth Ministries

Jeffrey Ryman

Minister of Music

Christopher Wszalek

Organist

Lou Dolive

Handbell Director

Joan Swift

Director of Children's Music

Mitzi White

Developmental Preschool Director

Martha Pierce

Administrative Assistant

Paul Sorrell

Treasurer

Kathy Henderson

Covenant Nurse

Cleo Holly

Custodian

The Mission of Covenant Presbyterian Church is Striving to be Faithful Disciples of Christ: Worshiping with Joy, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love.

Covenant Connection is a publication of Covenant Presbyterian Church. The newsletter is published bi-weekly to inform members and friends of church programs, news and events. The Connection newsletter is online at www.covenantpresstaunton.org.

COVENANT



2001 North Coalter Street
Staunton, VA 24401

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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STAUNTON, VA
24401

*Striving to be Faithful Disciples of Christ:
Worshiping with Joy, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love*



The Outreach Team
reminds you
"PEANUT BUTTER SUNDAY"
is the first Sunday of every month!
You can drop off your jar of
peanut butter in the covered
area just outside of the
church office.

"These Days" Devotion Booklet
for July, August, and September
are now available for pick up in
the entry area by the church
office.



TRUST GOD NO MATTER WHAT

"When you pass through the waters, I will be
with you; and through the rivers, they shall not
overflow you. When you walk through the fire,
you shall not be burned. Nor shall the flame
scorch you. For I am the Lord your God."
Isaiah 43:2-3a