

Covenant Connection

November 23, 2020 | Bi-Weekly Newsletter of Covenant Presbyterian Church

Connect *with the* Pastor



On the eve of the holiday season the coronavirus is surging across our nation and community. Positivity rates, hospitalizations, and COVID deaths are rising dramatically. While there is encouraging news about effective vaccines being available in the not-too-distant future, the present reality is challenging for all of us. Family gatherings have the potential to become viral nightmares, thus the recommendation from the CDC, public health officials, and many governors (both Republican and Democrat) urging us not to travel over the holidays and to limit celebrations to those within existing households. That can pose a dilemma for those who have long-standing family traditions of getting together at Thanksgiving and Christmas; it can be especially hard for those who live alone and have no one else with whom to celebrate. What then are we to do?

In our midweek worship services, we have been reflecting on the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*. Those *fruits* seem especially appropriate to our Thanksgiving celebrations as we give thanks for bountiful harvests, for many of those fruits speak to how we celebrate. We share *joy* and *love* with family and friends. We practice *kindness* and *generosity*. We try to exercise *self-control* in our eating – with varying degrees of success! This year, I believe a few of those fruits offer some additional guidance. While it is *love* and *faithfulness* that urge us to gather with family, it is also *love* and *faithfulness* that may urge us to stay apart this year in order to keep one another safe. *Patience* not only speaks to waiting for the turkey to be done, but also to waiting for a vaccine to arrive and the virus to pass so that we meet safely again. *Self-control* is needed not only as a guard against gluttony, but also in making wise decisions for ourselves and our loved ones that may not be what we *want* to do, but may be what we *need* to do.

We have much for which to be thankful this year, despite the awful pandemic year it has been. Take some time to count your blessings this week. Advent begins next Sunday; it is a time of anticipation and preparation for Jesus' coming. So anticipate and prepare well!

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Monday Morning Bible Study



Join us each Monday
at 10:30 am
via Zoom online.
A link to the meeting is
sent out each Sunday
via opt-in email

Items for the next
newsletter are
due to Martha by
**9:00 AM on Friday,
December 4th.**

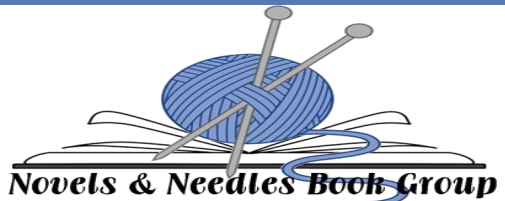


Please email her at:
covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com

Please keep in your prayers:

Amy Diduch and her family
on the death of her father,
Fred McCormick,
on November 13.

Condolences



Novels & Needles Book Group
Novels & Needles Book Group
is meeting on Friday,
December 11th, at 10:00 AM
in the Breezeway and via Zoom.
Please contact Susan Polly to let
her know how you intend to
attend the meeting.

Connect with the Pastor (continued)

As you do, remember that the year is not yet over, and the virus does not care about our holidays. As you plan your Thanksgiving menu and your Christmas gifts, include some fruits of the Spirit, for they are God's gifts to us so that we may live into that great commandment to love one another by keeping each other safe and well! This virus shall pass – be patient! Be safe! Be well! Be a blessing to those you love! Happy Thanksgiving!



- ◆ DISTRIBUTE FOOD to local families at VCFP: SOCIALLY DISTANCED volunteering on Mon, Wed, and Thurs, 8:30 to 11:00 AM; and Tues, 4:00 to 5:45 PM. Contact Cecil Wright or Ike Moore at 540-430-2844 or just show up to help!
- ◆ Join Feeding America by contacting your legislator for SNAP credit support for your local food pantries at:
https://www.feedingamerica.org/take-action/raise-your-voice?mc_cid=0424190280&mc_eid=d431e1b2e2
Contact Cliff Gilchrest for more information.
- ◆ DISTRIBUTE LEARNING PACKETS to McSwain/Bessie Weller students. Drop off/Pick up packets once a week in a socially distanced manner to student homes. Contact Karen Peterson to sign up!
- ◆ TUTOR at Boys and Girls Club, Monday thru Friday, from 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM, in a socially distanced manner for homework and literacy support. Contact Robyn Sommerfield if you would like to help!

Session Highlights

At its stated meeting on November 15, the Session took the following actions:

- ◆ Approved a fundraiser for Meals on Wheels for the Pre-K class
- ◆ Agreed to continue virtual worship on Sunday mornings
- ◆ Approved reallocation of some Outreach funds budgeted for mission trips



Dear Covenant Family:

Thank you so much for all the cards, phone calls, and meals during these last few months. We are healing nicely and looking forward to being active participants in the not too distant future. How blessed we are to be part of such a caring community! We truly appreciate all your encouragement.

Bill & Jane Lobb

Dear Covenant Presbyterian Women:

I cannot tell you how delighted I was to receive the Honorary Life Membership Award. It was certainly a surprise, and I never thought I would ever be the recipient of this award. Thank you to the ladies for thinking of me! I always treasure my time with the ladies of our church as we have a good time whenever we get together. Whether it be our Bible studies, luncheons, dinners, making and delivering Christmas baskets and cards, filling hygiene kits or delivering dinner to the Free Clinic, we always are looking for ways we can serve others. I'm glad to be a part of this wonderful group of women. Thank you for honoring me!!

Carolyn Hensley



Children's Corner

REMINDER: Sign-Up for Mid-Week Worship

To provide an opportunity for safe in-person worship, we will offer a service of prayer, Scripture, reflection, and instrumental music in the Sanctuary each Wednesday evening beginning at 6:00 pm. The service will be about a half hour in length. There will be no congregational singing or choir as current evidence indicates those have the greatest potential for spreading the virus. Masks and social distancing will be required, which means we will be limited to about 60 people in the sanctuary for each service. Those who want to attend will need to sign up by noon on the day of the service you will be attending. Call the church at 540-885-2138, or email Martha Pierce (covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com).



Donations Needed for Gingerbread House Kits

Donations of candy,
powdered sugar, and
sandwich-size ziplock
bags are needed.

Please bring your
donation and place in
the box located in the
church office vestibule
by Wednesday,
December 16th.



Fun Thanksgiving Facts



The presidential pardon of a turkey became a tradition in 1947 by President Truman.



The heaviest recorded turkey was 86 pounds.



Thanksgiving became a national holiday in 1863.



Ben Franklin wanted the turkey to replace the eagle as the national bird.



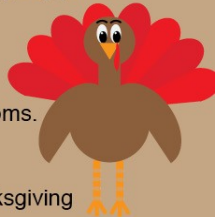
The first Macy's Thanksgiving day parade was held in 1924.



Male turkeys are called Toms.



Canadians celebrate Thanksgiving too, just in October.





WENONAH THANKSGIVING DINNER PROJECT

Mick Lambert, John Sayers, and Cliff Gilchrist had the pleasure of meeting Pastor Elaine Rose at Wenonah Elementary with everyone's grateful gifts of Thanksgiving Dinners for the families in this low income neighborhood of Waynesboro. Many people commented when they brought their contribution for the dinners that they were so glad they had this opportunity to give at this moment. It wasn't easy to know how to respond. What is most gratifying is to say both thank you and you're welcome simultaneously and not know which takes precedence because both are so very meaningful.



COVENANT'S ADVENT DEVOTION BOOKLET

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Our Advent devotion is hot off the presses and ready for your perusal. This year's devotion contains a combination of art, poetry, and reflections from the artists at "A Sanctified Art" as well as devotions written by our own Covenant family. You may pick up a hard

copy in the vestibule beginning on Wednesday, November 25. We will also post each day's devotion on Facebook. If you would like to receive an email every morning with that day's devotion, please fill out this form (<https://forms.gle/co9TAvN3Y6wex1dV6>) and we will add you to the unique Advent Devotion-only email list. Season's Greetings!

December Activities for All



TRIM THE TREE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5 - 2:30 OR 4:00 PM



NEW THIS ADVENT SEASON! GET IN THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT WITH AN AFTERNOON OF MERRY MAKING AS WE DECORATE A LIVE CHRISTMAS TREE. RESERVE YOUR TABLE AND MAKE NATURAL ORNAMENTS TO ADORN OUR OUTSIDE TREE. WEATHER PERMITTING, THIS EVENT WILL BE HELD OUTSIDE. RESERVE YOUR TABLE FOR UP TO 5 GUESTS BY EMAILING MARTHA AT COVENANTPCUSASTAUNTON@GMAIL.COM OR CALLING 540-885-2138. SPACES ARE LIMITED TO ASSURE SOCIAL DISTANCING. PLEASE BE SURE TO INDICATE YOUR PREFERRED TIME.

GINGERBREAD HOUSE TO-GO KITS

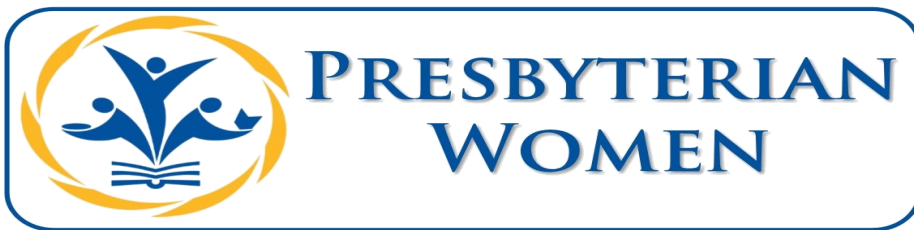
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18 - 4:00 TO 6:00 PM

WISH TO MAKE A GINGERBREAD HOUSE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON? THEN LOOK NO FURTHER THAN COVENANT'S TO-GO GINGERBREAD HOUSE KITS. THE KITS COMPLETE WITH CANDY, ICING, AND INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PICK-UP ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18 FROM 4:00 TO 6:00 PM IN A SAFE AND SOCIALLY DISTANCED MANNER. CONTACT DIANA BOHART AT BOHART@GMAIL.COM TO RESERVE ONE (OR MORE) FOR YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS. HOUSES ARE PROVIDED BY THE COVENANT FELLOWSHIP TEAM. PLEASE TAKE A PHOTO OF YOU AND YOUR COMPLETED HOUSE AND EMAIL IT ALONG WITH NAMES OF THOSE IN THE PICTURE TO MARTHA AT COVENANTPCUSASTAUNTON@GMAIL.COM SO WE CAN INCLUDE THEM IN AN UPCOMING NEWSLETTER.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Be Thankful! 	23 Covenant Connection Published 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study via Zoom	24	25 7:00 pm Youth Prayer Time via Zoom	26 Church Office Closed 	27 Church Office Closed	28
29 4 CENTS A MEAL 10:30 AM Live Stream Worship Service on Covenant's Facebook Page 4:00 PM Youth Chrismons	30 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study via Zoom 7:00 PM Elder Training in FH	Dec. 1	2 6:00 PM Midweek In-person Service Sign-up by calling the church at 540-885-2138	3	4 9:00AM Items due for Newsletter	5
6 PEANUT BUTTER SUNDAY PRESBYTERIAN COFFEE PROJECT 10:30 AM Live Stream Worship Service on Covenant's Facebook Page 2:00 PM High School via Zoom 7:00 PM Middle School via Zoom	7 Covenant Connection Published 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study via Zoom 5:30 PM Congregational Care Team in FH 7:00 PM Facilities Team 7:15 PM Worship Team in FH	8 5:30 PM Preschool Team	9 6:00 PM Midweek In-person Service Sign-up by calling the church at 540-885-2138	10	11 10:00 AM Novels & Needles Book Group	12

NOV - DEC 2020



Carolyn Hensley and **Jane Wimmer** have been awarded **life membership** status recognizing their achievements. Both women are beloved and cherished by their families, have given generously of their gifts and graces to Covenant Presbyterian Church, generally, and to Presbyterian Women, specifically, are friends to everyone whom they encounter, and are role models for all. Each received a beautiful pin, a certificate, and join the list of Covenant Presbyterian Women to be so honored.

Presbyterian Women met via Zoom on November 10. Nineteen members participated as the leadership team was installed, and the life memberships were awarded. It was good to be together virtually. Thank you, John Peterson, for installing the officers and offering your prayers, and Sarah Wolf for tech support.

If you have had trouble finding the Bible Study video, email Frances Craig at craig.francesc@gmail.com for the directions. Currently, Lynn Grimm's video is airing.

Peggy Roberson will teach in December. PW appreciates the help that Sarah Wolf has provided. Mary Ann Stripling has slots for a couple of more leaders and would love to hear from volunteers.

The deadline for receiving Thank Offering contributions is November 23. Send checks to Dee Norris. Please write "Thank Offering" in the memo line. You can also send Dee your monthly contributions. Dee's address is 126 Woodland Drive, Staunton, VA 24401.

There are a few Bible Study books available. Contact Carolyn Hensley to make arrangements to get a book. This year's Bible Study is beautiful, and the book features lovely visuals that enhance the study.

Rejoice always. Pray continually. Give thanks in every situation because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

***1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
Common English Bible***

Worship Service at 10:30 am each Sunday

**Live
Streaming**

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

OUTREACH CONTINUES

Boys and Girls Club —

We continue to participate in the Nextrex Program, collecting plastic bags for a park bench. 500 pounds = 1 bench. Collect your bags and bring to the church office vestibule to drop in a designated receptacle, or drop off at RefillRenew, 110-1 Baldwin Street. Also, we need volunteers to help with taking the bags collected at the church to Food Lion. Volunteers will need to weigh the bags (there is a luggage scale next to the receptacle at the church), advise Robyn of the weight, and drop bags off at Food Lion. If you would like to help, you can sign up at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0A4AAAE2BA6F94-covenant1>



Donate supplies to Boys and Girls Club:

school supplies (especially dry erase pens, lined paper, Kindergarten lined paper, pencils, crayons, and colored pencils). Look for a drop off box in the church office vestibule.

Shelburne Project —

We continue to collect toiletry items and non-perishable food items for Shelburne Middle School families. The hygiene items and nonperishable foods will always be useful, but we are also collecting school supplies . . . items such as backpacks, hand sanitizer, and binders . . . to have on hand for students for school. ***FYI . . . as far as serving our kids . . . we have 105 families at last count who are asking for food. That is 5 times as many as last year!! So, again cereal and peanut butter are always good!*** Collection boxes are located at the church in the vestibule by the office.

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2001 N. Coalter Street, Staunton, VA 24401

www.covenantpresstaunton.org

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

Office hours: Monday-Thursdays 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.



**2001 North Coalter Street
Staunton, VA 24401**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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24401

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

We're on the web!
covenantpresstaunton.org

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.



Fill the bucket

