

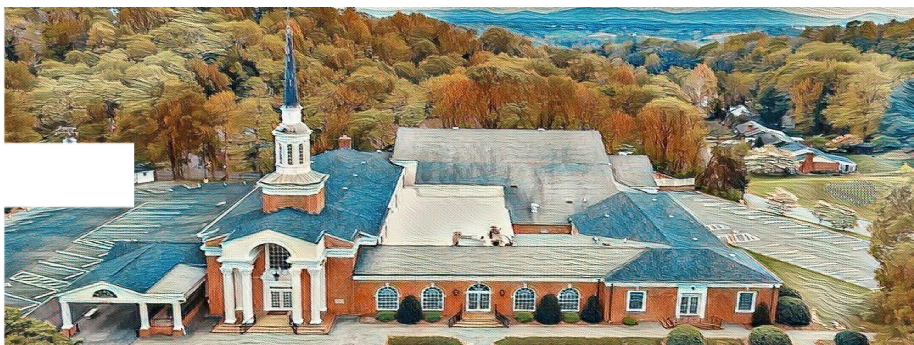
SEPTEMBER 11, 2023  
STAUNTON, VA



MATTHEW 25

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# COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

We are a Matthew 25 congregation, an initiative in the PCUSA to be intentional in addressing issues of congregational vitality, structural racism, and systemic poverty. We made that decision as a Session over a year ago, yet we still struggle to interpret what that means for us in our lives and life together. Candidates for our associate pastor position have taken note of our commitment to Matthew 25 and have asked what that means for us. How might you answer that question?

As a Session we discuss one aspect of the Matthew 25 initiative each month, especially how those issues have impacted our church and community. Several years ago, we identified the impact of poverty on children as a societal need to be addressed across the life of the congregation. We read books and held forums with local agencies to better understand the issues. We began new programs with the Boys & Girls Club and other agencies to address some of those issues. We are still trying to address the impact of poverty on children, but Matthew 25 calls us to respond to the issues around SYSTEMIC poverty. We have taken strides in addressing issues of racism in our community, including a public reading of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, but Matthew 25 calls us to

*(continued on page 3)*

VISIT US ONLINE AT  
[WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG](http://WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG)

*Serving*  
**GOD**  
*Together*



### **GREETERS**

SEPT. 17 -

8:30 AM....Gretchen & Mel Allmond  
10:30 AM....Dan Drumheller,  
Carter and Mason Lawson

SEPT. 24-

8:30 AM....Cheryl & Rick Fauerbach  
10:30 AM....Janet Surratt, Sue Morley,  
Randy Smith, Jim Britton

### **NURSERY (10:30 AM)**

SEPT. 17- Cindy Bowman

SEPT. 24 - TBD

### **COVENANT KIDS (10:30 AM)**

SEPT. 17- Joan Sayers

SEPT. 24 - TBD

### **FLOWER COORDINATORS**

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

### **CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING**

SEPTEMBER - Bill Terry



## **Monday Morning Bible Study**

### **Join us on Mondays at 10:30 AM**

We look at the text for the next Sunday's sermon. Come dive a little deeper into God's word, share your insights, and get a head start on the next sermon.

We will meet **in person** in Room 6 **and** also offer this meeting **virtually** through Zoom. A link to the Zoom meeting will be sent out via opt-ins each Sunday afternoon.

### **TO OUR VISITORS**

If you have been visiting and are interested in learning more about Covenant, our ministries, or membership, please call John Peterson at 540-885-2138.



### **NURSERY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Covenant needs one additional adult (age 14+) to volunteer in the nursery for infants through 4-year-olds each week during 10:30 service. These volunteer spots are for the second adult present to satisfy our Child Protective Policy. If you would like to volunteer, please sign up at:

<http://bit.ly/3Y9CvWf>

## **Ushers/Greeters Needed**



**Help is always needed!**

If you are available at the 8:30 or 10:30 service, please sign-up at <http://bit.ly/3KPmamT>

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK *(cont'd)*

address issues of STRUCTURAL racism. In our long-range plan we identified challenges for us in growing in spiritual vitality, but Matthew 25 calls us to address CONGREGATIONAL vitality. These initiatives are big and can seem overwhelming. What can we do – as individuals, as one congregation – to make a difference in them?

Mother Teresa once was asked how she could keep on trying to make a difference in the slums of Calcutta when there was so much poverty and suffering around her. She responded: "Because it is important that I hold this one child now." She kept on keeping on as Jesus did – one person at a time, one day at a time. That is what we are called to do in addressing these Matthew 25 initiatives and in being the church faithfully – serve one day at a time, one person at a time. Session has committed to invite one person to join in doing something – come to church, join a Sunday School class, help with an Outreach project, be in a dinner group – as a way of building congregational vitality. Might you try the same – to accept an invitation, to extend an invitation to a friend or acquaintance, or to try something new this month as a way of responding to Jesus' call to us in Matthew 25? For it is in serving one another, including lots of others, that we serve the risen Christ!



Items for the next newsletter are due by **9:00 AM on Friday, Sept. 22nd.**

Please email Martha at: [covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com](mailto:covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com)



The plasterwork, painting, and carpet cleaning in the Sanctuary are complete.

We will be worshipping again in the Sanctuary beginning on Sunday, September 17th, for the 8:30 and 10:30 services.

Thank you for your patience and willing spirit as we spent about a month worshipping together in the Great Hall while the work in the Sanctuary occurred.

Be sure to take note at how beautiful and fresh the Sanctuary looks!

On Rally Sunday we recognized Joan Swift with gratitude for her leadership of our children's choirs since 2014. Joan has been a blessing to a whole generation of Covenant kids and to us as a congregation. Thank you, Joan!





Kathy Henderson, RN • (540) 290-6396  
covenantnurse@gmail.com  
Contact Kathy with medical questions or  
for a blood pressure check.

WITH KATHY HENDERSON, RN

**September is Sepsis Awareness Month**, with September 13 designated "International Sepsis Awareness Day."

Until a family member's recent bout with non-hospital-acquired sepsis, I had not given much thought to the condition, believing it to be something unfortunate that sometimes happened to people who'd picked up an unrelated infection while hospitalized.

Not so.

Sepsis is not an "illness," but, rather, the body's "extreme response to (a usually bacterial, but sometimes viral) infection.... Triggering a chain reaction ... that can lead to tissue damage, organ failure and death," the CDC explains.

*At least 1.7 million people acquire sepsis each year: Of these, at least 270,000 will die, according to NIH statistics. (CDC statistics estimate that as many as 350,000 will die or be admitted to hospice care.) For comparison: Only heart disease, cancer and Covid cause more deaths in an average year.*

Despite ongoing research, the mechanics of sepsis onset and treatment remain murky. Early symptoms can be similar to flu or Covid, but tend to progress rapidly. Signs/symptoms include: fever, chills, unusually high or low temperatures, rapid heart rate, shortness of breath, dizziness, sleepiness, confusion and pain (general or localized).

**Of note:** Sepsis is a crisis on the order of stroke, where time is a critical component in effective treatment. **Most at risk?** Children younger than a year, all adults over 65, those with compromised immune systems, diabetes or cancer.

If you do end up in the hospital with a diagnosis of sepsis (sometimes referred to as "septicemia"), insist that your discharge nurse talk with you *in detail* about the process of recovery: It usually is a long, frustrating journey.

For more information, check the following links:

<https://www.sepsis.org/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/sepsis/>

**Fun factoid:** A new study indicates we have a "**New Norm for Body Temperature.**"

After years of listening to medical folks insist their equipment was "off" because my temperature rarely topped 97 F, I was delighted to read that there's probably nothing wrong with me. After faithfully recording hundreds of thousands of temperature readings over a nine-year period, Stanford researchers concluded that the "average" human temperature is 98 F, not the 98.6 F standard to which we've adhered since 1851, when German physician Carl Wunderlich recorded more than a million body temperatures from 25,000 patients to arrive at an "average, normal" human body temperature. The Stanford researchers, of course, applied 21 st century methodology to their findings. Their basic conclusion: "Normal" body temperature is affected by size and age (thinner and older people tend to skew lower, for example), time of day, the foods we eat. If you're interested in the details, check out:

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/article-abstract/2809098>

Much more fun: See how your own average compares to the study's findings by using this simple, online calculator: <https://normaltemperature.stanford.edu/>



# Covenant Preschool Happenings



We are on week three of the new school year! We are super excited to have some new staff as well as returning teachers! While we had a rough start with four of the staff getting COVID, we are back on track and the teachers are having a great time with the children! The children are learning the school routine and getting to know their teachers and school friends!

We will spend some time in September exploring apples and seeing what fun we can have with all of the different ways they can be used in cooking, play, and art.



Pre-K has already discovered their favorite type of apple is Granny Smith and made a graph to show their findings. Ms. Kara and Ms. Crystal also helped them conduct a fun science experiment with skittles.

Preschool 2, with Ms. Karen and Ms. Maya have enjoyed “The Giving Tree” by Shel Silverstein and explored the property for trees and made their own crown like the boy in the story.



Our Preschool 1 class is learning how to follow a routine and adapt to being away from their grownups. They have explored easel painting and are learning how to have circle time with Ms. Valerie and Ms. Lindsay!



October will bring harvest fun and enjoying watching the leaves change. Feel free to stop by in the mornings and see what adventures we are having!  
— Mitzi White, Director and the Preschool Staff

The Preschool is in need of dress-up clothes for the children to play in. If you have children’s Halloween costumes or children’s dress-up costumes to donate, please bring them to the church office.

# September

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p><b>17</b> 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:15 AM Alpha Choir 9:30 AM Sunday School for All Ages 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:45 AM Omega Choir 11:45 AM Caregivers Group 7:00 PM STATED SESSION MEETING</p>	<p><b>11</b> <b>COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED</b> 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 5:30 PM Congregational Care Team 7:00 PM Facilities Team 7:15 PM Worship Team</p>	<p><b>12</b> 11:30 AM Presbyterian Women in the Fellowship Hall 5:30 PM Preschool Team 7:00 PM Stewardship &amp; Finance Team</p>	<p><b>13</b> 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway 7:30 PM APNC</p>	<p><b>14</b> 8:45 AM Executive Team 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p>
<p><b>18</b> 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study</p>	<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>21</b> 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>22</b> 9:00 AM Newsletter Deadline</p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	
<p><b>24</b> 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:15 AM Alpha Choir 9:30 AM Sunday School for All Ages 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:45 AM Omega Choir 11:45 AM Fellowship Team 11:45 AM Grief Support Group</p>	<p><b>25</b> <b>COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED</b> 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study</p>	<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>27</b> 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway</p>	<p><b>28</b> 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>

## ONGOING OUTREACH

### Peanut Butter Sunday

First Sunday of Each Month

You can drop off your jar of peanut butter in the vestibule area just outside the church office.

**Fun Fact:** On average you donate over 80 lbs. of food per week. That's a lot of peanut butter!



### FILL THE BUCKET - HELP RESTOCK THE VERONA FOOD PANTRY

Help feed our neighbors in need! Donations may be dropped off in the **RED BUCKET** located in the vestibule area just outside the church office or in the Narthex.



500 lbs. = a bench

### BAGS TO BENCHES

**THANK YOU, COVENANT!** In 3 years we have kept over 2541 pounds of plastic out of the landfills. **AND** we've donated 4 benches to the Boys and Girls Club. A fifth bench is on order. Help us keep up the good work:

- Please make sure your bags are **CLEAN, DRY** and **FREE OF FOOD RESIDUE**.
- Plastic bags need to be stretchy. Look for a #2 or #4 recycling symbol (polyethylene films).
- You don't need to cut off zip tops or remove paper labels.
- Please no cellophane (as in snack bags) or metallic films (see nextrex.com for details)

**WANT TO HELP?** Volunteers are always needed to do the weekly weigh-in and take bags to Food Lion. Sign up at <https://bit.ly/3CzoJTW>

**Questions?** Contact Robyn Sommerfield at [robynsommerfield@gmail.com](mailto:robynsommerfield@gmail.com)



### SHELburnE PANTRY

Needs are things like snack bars, soup, pasta, hygiene items, household supplies like small containers of laundry detergent and dish soap, etc. Also, at present the supply of cereal and fruit (canned and single-serve snack containers) need a boost. So if you're moved to donate, place your items in the boxes outside the church office or inside the Great Hall entrance.

As always, thank you for helping our community's children and their families!



PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN

The fellowship of Presbyterian Women at Covenant meets on the second Tuesday of each month starting at 10:30 in the morning except on **September 12** when the gathering begins at **11:30 AM**.

If you are a member or one who attends Covenant or another Presbyterian Church and are a woman, you are a Presbyterian Woman. If you participate in another denomination, are a seeker, or not attending any church and you are a woman, there's a place for you, too.

The gatherings promise engaging Bible Study and connecting with old friends and making new friends.

The goals for 2023 – 2024 are to:  
Rejoice ♦ Give Thanks ♦ Pray

All women are welcome!  
There's no FUN without U!



The CareGivers Group will meet immediately after the 10:30 service on **Sunday, September 17th** in Room 5. Anyone caring for a loved one who would like to talk with others in similar situations is invited to come. Would you like more information? Contact Joan Sayers.



**Sunday, September 24,  
at 11:45AM in Room 5.**

After a short break, we will be reconvening our Grief Support Group. We meet the 4th Sunday of each month immediately after the 10:30 service. Grief takes many shapes and forms and is a process that each person experiences uniquely in their own way. There are many types of losses that every one of us will be affected by, either directly or indirectly during our lifetime. The death of a spouse, child, dear friend, or beloved pet, loss of social interaction associated with COVID, loss of independence through disability/aging are a few examples. Our group provides a welcoming and safe place to share, connect, and support each other . . . a place where you feel comfortable sharing your experiences and feelings with others on the same journey, knowing you are not alone. We hope you can join us!



Mark your calendars for  
**TOW—Together on  
Wednesday**

The first gathering will be on  
October 4th at 6:00 PM  
in the Great Hall.

Watch upcoming newsletters  
for more information and  
sign-ups to bring food or  
to register your attendance.



# TO OUR NEW STAFF!



We are pleased to welcome our new Director of Children's Music, Kat McLean. Kat is a native of Waynesboro, Virginia, where she graduated from Waynesboro High School in 2014. She received her Bachelor of Music in Music Education from Radford University in May 2019 where she studied choral conducting under Dr. Meredith Bowen and early childhood education under Dr. Jennifer McDonel. She gave voice lessons and assisted in musical theater workshops as well as choral rehearsals at the Virginia Summer Residential Governor's School for Visual & Performing Arts and Humanities at Radford University in the summers of 2018 and 2019.

She attended the Choral Music Experience at Michigan State University in the summer of 2017 to study under Dr. Sandra Snow and Dr. Lee Kesselman where she worked with and conducted the Michigan State University Children's Choir. In the spring of 2020, she had the opportunity to conduct the Danville All-City Elementary Choir in Danville, Virginia. She began her career as the choral director at William Fleming High School in Roanoke, Virginia. She is currently in her 5th year of education as the music teacher at A.R. Ware Elementary School in Staunton.

**SEPTEMBER 17, 2023**



**COME SING WITH US**

***Make a joyful noise before the Lord!***

**ALPHA CHOIR**

**9:15 am - BEFORE SUNDAY SCHOOL  
GRADES 1-3 IN THE CHOIR ROOM**

**OMEGA CHOIR**

**11:45 am - AFTER CHURCH  
GRADES 4-7 OR 8 IN THE CHOIR ROOM**



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

OCTOBER 1st

Every time the world is troubled,  
and we dare to wake and see;  
every time our neighbors call us,  
and we stand with those in need;  
and every time we are peacemakers,  
and the fearful are set free,

In our living,  
in our giving,  
we are there.



*We are there.*

The Peace & Global Witness Offering  
offers light to those in the shadows  
and guides us all into the ways of peace.  
We come together to promote the peace of Christ  
by addressing systems of injustice in our own  
communities and around the world.

25%

of this Offering  
stays with  
our congregation  
to support  
peacemaking and  
reconciliation  
in our own  
community.

25%

of this Offering  
goes to our  
mid council  
to join with other  
congregations  
to support  
peacemaking work  
in our region.

50%

of this Offering  
supports the  
work being done  
by Presbyterians  
across the  
globe.



## WAYS TO GIVE



Through your  
congregation



Donate by  
credit card online at  
[pcusa.org/peace-global](http://pcusa.org/peace-global)



Text PCUSAPEACE  
to 41444

## COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**Mailing Address:**

PO Box 2948, Staunton, VA 24402

**Physical Address:**

2001 N. Coalter Street, Staunton

Office — 540-885-2138

Fax — 540-885-4399

**Office Hours:**

Mon - Thurs, 8:15AM - 3:15PM

Fri, 8:15AM - 12:15PM



## MINISTERIAL & PROGRAM STAFF

**John C. Peterson**

*Pastor*

**Jeffrey Ryman**

*Minister of Music*

**Christopher Wszalek**

*Organist*

**Lou Dolive**

*Handbell Director*

**Katherine McLean**

*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](http://www.covenantpresstaunton.org).

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**MATTHEW 25**

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

