



What's INSIDE

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Sunday Volunteers Hanging of the Greens Novels & Needles Monday Morning Bible Stud Ushers/Greeters Needed From the Pastor's Desk (cont) Christmas Lunch at Trinity Preschool Program Christmas Eve Services Special Offering Inclement Weather Prayer List/ Birthdays	2 2 dy2 3 3 3 5
Calendar	
Caroling Christmas Concert	٥
Greenery in Honor	
Presbyterian Women	7
Outreach	10
CareGivers	11
Grief Support Group	11
Nursery Workers Needed	11
Together on Wednesday	.back



A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

From the Pastor's Desk

With the first Sunday in Advent, we begin a new church year. Advent reminds us that our Christian journey does not begin with Jesus' birth. It begins centuries before with the story of God's creation of the world, God's covenant with Abraham, God's deliverance of the people from bondage in Egypt, God's selection of a king in David, and God's promise of a savior declared through the voices of prophets. It is against that backdrop of God's hand at work in the lives of God's flawed people, that we celebrate God's coming among us in the birth of the Savior in Bethlehem.

It is all too easy to remove Jesus' birth from any historical context and revel in that Silent Night in the Little Town of Bethlehem when Angels We Have Heard on High sang Joy to the World and O Come, All Ye Faithful. But the good news of Christmas is that in the miracle of incarnation, God does not stop the world to come among us, but rather comes amid the hustle and bustle of daily life, comes not with great fanfare (apart from the angel chorus) but in the dark of night in an out-of-the-way stable. Perhaps then it is appropriate that we celebrate his coming at one of the busiest times of the year, though much of the busyness is of our own making. We can be so busy preparing for and celebrating Christmas, that we miss Jesus' coming. So, the challenge for us, as for those first century Bethlehemites, is to pause amid the chaos of our lives to listen, so that we may hear the

(continued on page 3)



GREETERS

DEC. 10 -

8:30 AM....Rebecca Allison, Linda Tenney

10:30 AM....Dan Drumheller, Randy Smith, Janet Surratt

DFC. 17 -

8:30 AM....Leslie Burdick, Jackie Dull

10:30 AM....Dan Drumheller. Randy Smith

NURSERY (10:30 AM)

DEC. 10 - Beverly Riddell

DEC. 17 - TBD

FLOWER COORDINATORS

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING

DECEMBER -- Randy Smith



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.



Help us begin our joyful preparations for the Christmas season as we decorate the church with greenery! You are invited to the Hanging of the Greens, which will be held Saturday, December 9th, beginning at 9:30 AM. If we have enough folks, we should be finished by 11:00 AM. Enjoy hot drinks, Christmas goodies, and good fellowship!



Novels & Needles Book Club will meet at 10:00 AM on Friday, December 8th at the home of Joan Swift.

Potpourri : Come share a favorite book or introduce a new book.

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)

songs of angels and perhaps the cry of a baby and welcome the Savior.

As you prepare for Christmas this year, I urge you to take some time, to make some time, to pause and listen along the way – listen to the voices of the prophets offering hope-filled promises of a savior, listen to the songs of angels, listen to Gospel writers speaking of his birth, listen to the testimony of Covenant friends in our Advent devotional, and listen for God speaking through those voices or in a whispered moment of silence to say to you once again: Rejoice! For, to you, for you, a child is born who is the Savior of the world! Amid the chaos of the world and the chaos of the season and the chaos of your life, be at peace! Be at peace!



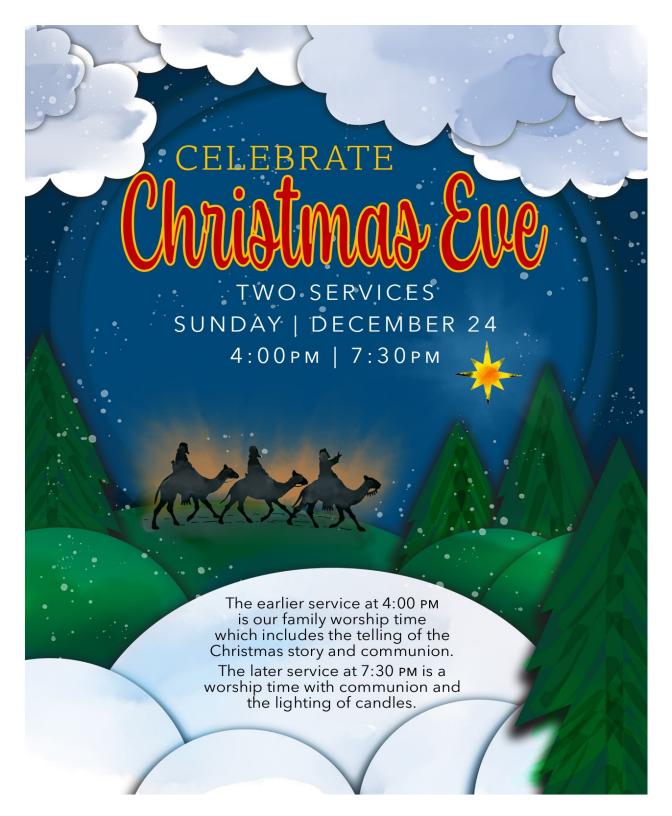
The children of Covenant's Preschool are getting ready for their annual **Christmas Program!** They will be performing for family and friends on **Thursday, December 14 at 12:00 PM** in the Great Hall!
John is our narrator. Please feel free to join us!

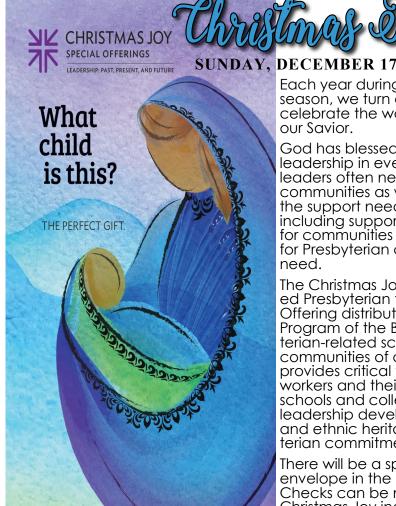


Items for the next newsletter are due by 9:00 AM on Friday, December 15th.

Please email Martha at: covenantpcusastaunton @gmail.com







Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

God has blessed the Church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. This Offering addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color, and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

There will be a special insert and an offering envelope in the December 17th bulletin. Checks can be made out to Covenant with Christmas Joy indicated in the memo area.



The weather outside is frightful! Are church services or events canceled? Want to know the answer?

Information is available via an opt-in email, through the Covenant Facebook page (www.facebook.com/Covenant-Presbyterian-Church-163891301309), on the home page of the church website (covenantpresstaunton.org), and on WHSV-TV.

If you are not on the opt-in email list and would like to be, please contact Martha in the church office at 540-885-2138.

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Sunday, December 17th @ 1:00 pm

We will spread holiday cheer as we visit our Covenant family & friends in various locations.

After church, we will enjoy pizza in the Great Hall before boarding the bus.

Please sign up at https://bit.ly/3MME2yK so we can order the correct amount of pizza.

Would you like to contribute to the Christmas Decorating Fund to help provide greenery to beautify the church during the Advent season? You can even do this in honor or memory of a loved one. Just fill out this form and return it with your contribution to the church office by December 11th. The list of honor/ memory contributions will be distributed closer to Christmas.

(Please clearly print info on this form.)

Mark	(
Donor name:		
Donor phone numb	er:	
In honor of:		
In memory of:		



REMINDERS!

December 5 at 10:00 AM:

Bow making for Christmas Greenery Baskets in Classroom 6. We will show you how to make bows with wired ribbon. Bring scissors.

December 12 at 10:30 AM:

Presbyterian Women gather for fellowship and Bible Study in the breezeway. Mary Ann Stripling is facilitating the conversation focusing on Luke 10:38-42. Mary and Martha encounter Jesus and are transformed.

December 13 at 10:30 AM:

Baskets will be assembled in the Fellowship Hall. After the baskets are made, they will be delivered. Please bring garden shears or clippers, if you have them. Contact Linda Foster or Jane Wimmer with questions. One thing there's no question about . . . this is a joy-filled project!

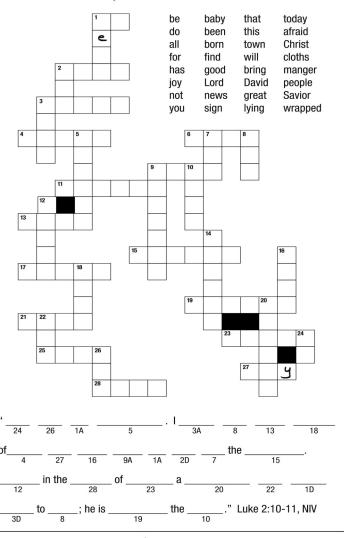
Gathering of Greens:

If you have evergreens (spruce, fir, cedar, pine, boxwood, or others (no holly or nadina) and would like to share them, please bring them to the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, December 13th at 10:00 am. If you need help cutting the evergreens, please contact Linda Foster or Jane Wimmer.

Come! Join!
There's more FUN with U!

Puzzle!

The word list contains the angel's Christmas message to the shepherds. Fit those words into the crossword squares. Then write them on the correct lines below to complete Luke 2:10-11. NIV.



Answer: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10-11, NIV.



Peanut Butter SundayFirst 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!



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.



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



SHELBURNE PANTRY

Donations to the pantry are a blessing! The more urgent need for the pantry at this time are hygiene items such as shampoo, conditioner, liquid body wash, deodorant, and shaving razors. Also, snacks that are easy for the kids to grab and eat. Please place your donations in the boxes outside the church office or in the Narthex.

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



The next CareGivers meeting will be **December 17th** at 11:45AM.

For more information. please contact Ruth Arnold.



Because our normal meeting date for December falls on Christmas Eve, we will meet on December 10th at 11:45AM in Room 5.

Holidays can be a difficult time when you are missing a loved one who has passed away. We hope to continue to share coping and self-care strategies to help navigate the holiday season. Our group offers a welcoming and safe place to share, connect, and support each other.

We hope you will join us!



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

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

Rachel Watson

Associate Pastor

Jeffrey Ryman Minister of Music

Christopher Wszalek **O**rganist

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.



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Worshiping with Joy, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love

