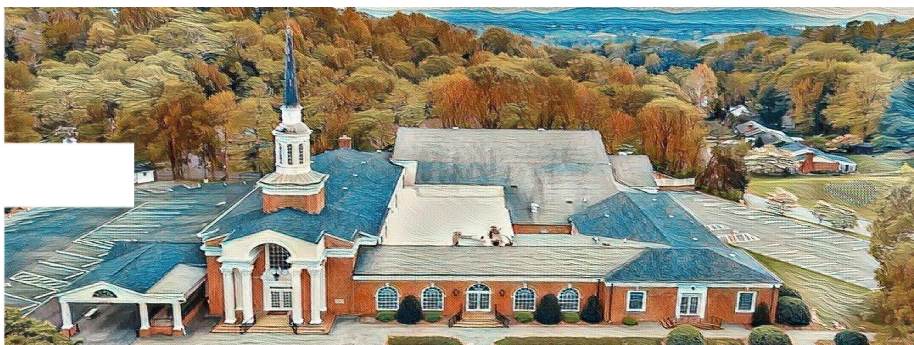


JANUARY 29, 2024
STAUNTON, VA



COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

From the Pastor's Desk

On Saturday, January 20, Session held its annual retreat here at the church. A significant focus for us was implementation of the Matthew 25 initiative here at Covenant. I shared some data around health equities in our community and beyond, and Adam Campbell provided for us some information with regard to the work of the DEI commission in the city in order to help us understand some of the challenges that have been identified for us locally. Following review of our Long-Range Plan and our annual goals for 2023, Session adopted the following priorities for 2024:

- ◆ *Identify a Matthew 25 project and resource it appropriately.*
- ◆ *Understand and implement Christian Formation across the life of the church.*
- ◆ *Develop a plan for lay leadership & enabling identification of spiritual gifts.*
- ◆ *Share the good news in tangible ways beyond our walls and welcome community participation in the life of the church.*

These priorities are in addition to our ongoing commitments to ministry and work in the life of the church (e.g. worship, outreach, etc.). In coming weeks and months there will be more information shared about

(continued on page 3)

MANY ARE
THE PLANS IN THE
MIND OF A MAN,
but it is the
PURPOSE
OF THE LORD
that will
STAND.

PROVERBS
19:21, ESV

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VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG

Serving
GOD
Together



GREETERS

FEB. 4 -

8:30 AM....Gary & Nancy Gourley

10:30 AM....Dan Drumheller

FEB. 11 -

8:30 AM....Chris & Becky Earhart

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

NURSERY (10:30 AM)

FEB. 4 – Beverly Riddell

FEB. 11 – TBD

COVENANT KIDS (10:30 AM)

FEB. 4 – TBD

FEB. 11 – Anne Bell

FLOWER COORDINATORS

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING

FEBRUARY – Paul Sorrell

With Sympathy

Please keep in your prayers
Troy and Laura Lawson,
Troy's mother Bobbie, and
their family on the death of
Troy's father, Jeff Lawson, on
Monday morning, January 22,
2024, at his home. May God grant
Jeff eternal rest and grant to his
to his family comfort, peace,
and resurrection hope.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**HELPERS (age 14+) ARE NEEDED FOR
NURSERY & COVENANT KIDS
SUNDAYS DURING THE 10:30 SERVICE**

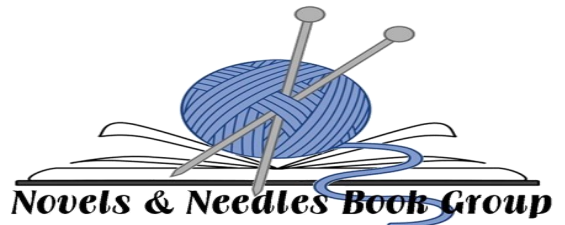
These volunteer spots are for the
second adult present to satisfy our
Child Protective Policy.

SIGN UP FOR NURSERY:

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

SIGN UP FOR COVENANT KIDS:

<https://bit.ly/4b2wFxA>



Novels & Needles Book Group

Novels & Needles Book Club
will meet at 10:00 AM on
Friday, February 9
in the Breezeway.

The book being discussed is
The Bookbinder
by Pip Williams

Members are encouraged to bring
their knitting or crocheting
which could benefit
the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

***We also welcome those who
do not knit or crochet.***

Please join us!

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

these priorities, but as a way of beginning the conversation, you might think of these priorities as addressing the following questions:

- ♦ What does it mean for us to be a Matthew 25 congregation, and how do we live in to that challenge?
- ♦ How is Christian Formation different from Christian Education, and what difference might it make for us to focus on "formation" instead of "education" in the life of the church?
- ♦ How do we help folks identify their spiritual gifts and provide opportunities for them to use those gifts in ministry?
- ♦ How might we be better evangelists for the good news we believe – as a church and as individuals – within the life of the church and reaching out to the community?

We hope that you will reflect on these questions and on these goals and join us in the conversation as we seek to discern where God is leading us, and then dare to follow that path!



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

At its annual retreat on Saturday, January 20, the Session took the following actions:

- ♦ Approved a request for letters of transfer for Brad and Anita Kurtz
- ♦ Elected Brandon Cline-Taskey and Cindy Bowman as commissioners to the February meeting of Presbytery
- ♦ Approved the annual PCUSA statistical report
- ♦ Approved participation in an Outreach project providing meals to homeless folks through SWARM
- ♦ Adopted four Session priorities for 2024



On Sunday, January 21st, Jacki Dull, Donna Hamric, and David Stahl were ordained and installed as elders. Also installed were Tom Bellamy, Tom Brooks, Melissa Druff, Mandy Drumheller, and Sam Hostetter, who had previously been ordained.

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

Please email Martha at: covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com

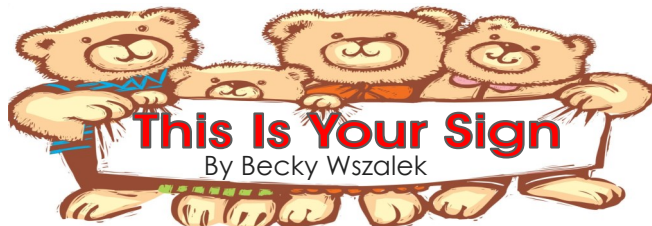


EQUAL EXCHANGE



The next Equal Exchange Sale is **Sunday, February 4th**. Items available are: regular coffee for

\$9.00, decaf coffee for \$10.00, tea for \$4.00, and dark chocolate for \$3.00. Make your purchase between the 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM worship services and after the 10:30 service. You can place a pre-order by calling 540-290-1089 or emailing bettyandcliff@comcast.net.



Every week I sit here saying, "Lord, give me a sign." I want to share your love and compassion. Show all, that you are divine. Our world holds many people. Some dull and some, they SHINE. Lord, help me to love them all. Please give me a sign. To reach out to all, to be like Christ. Just as Matthew 25 has said. Let us try our best without fear, without worry or dread.

So we offer this day, more than one way our efforts to combine.

Today Covenant, YES, we give you a sign.

It could be serving up lunch, over at the church called Trinity.

Or packing up and delivering food from the Verona food pantry.

These organizations and more all cost a great deal of coin.

So donating your abundance is another way for you to join.

In the fun that we're making, when we're sending supplies they're taking, to help our friends Crystal and Raph in Nigeria, far-a-way.

You may find international missions could lead you to Baja one day. Or close by to a jail, want to teach? There's tutoring after school.

We're taking volunteers for the boys and girls club in the narthex vestibule.

The community childcare center needs readers to show they care.

We've even been known to can up food and then of course — we SHARE!

So as a member of the Outreach Committee I formally invite you, to come visit the bulletin board in the breezeway. Visit it often, it may excite you! You can see by our gathering here and our hearts both yours and mine; our father in heaven has spoken clearly and we haven't wasted any time. So as you sit back and reflect on today's events I hope you'll find that today at least, yes, it's clear my friends. That this. . . This is your sign!

BLANKET SUNDAY IS FEBRUARY 18th!






Covenant's Women sponsor the Church World Service **Blanket Offering** each year in February. We will collect this offering throughout the month and into March so look for an offering envelope in the worship bulletin on February 18th.

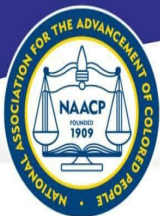
Your donation provides blankets to homeless people and victims of natural disasters. A \$10 donation provides one blanket. Your gift, along with the gifts of others, will provide comfort to a person in need—warming them body and soul.

Please place your offering in the collection plate or send/ drop off a check at the church made out to **Covenant Presbyterian Church** with "Blanket Offering" noted in the memo line. If giving online, select Blanket Offering from the list.



FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 29 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	30 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	31 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway	Feb. 1 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	2	3	
4 Peanut Butter Sunday Presbyterian Coffee Project 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:15 AM Alpha Choir 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:45 AM Omega Choir 11:45 AM Outreach Team	5 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 5:30 PM Congregational Care Team 7:00 PM Facilities Team 7:15 PM Worship Team	6	7 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway	8 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	9 9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline 10:00 AM Novels & Needles Book Group	10
11 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:15 AM Alpha Choir 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:45 AM Omega Choir 11:45 AM Christian Formation Team	12 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 7:00 PM Personnel Team	13 10:30 AM Presbyterian Women 5:30 PM Preschool Team 7:00 PM Stewardship & Finance Team	14 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Worship Service 	15 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	16 8:00 AM Executive Team 11:45 AM Covenant Men's Lunch	17
 Ash Wednesday						



NAACP

Staunton Branch #7119

2024 Unity Prayer Breakfast

"Together We Stand, Divided We Fall"

Saturday, February 24, 2024

9:00am - 12 pm

Covenant Presbyterian Church

2001 N. Coalter Street, Staunton, VA 24401

Keynote Speaker

Rev. Edward A. Scott

Pastor, Allen Chapel AME Church

\$40/per person or

\$240/table of 6



Tickets on Sale NOW!

An order form for tickets is available
in the church office;

checks can be made payable to
Staunton NAACP Branch #7119.



**ATTENTION PARENTS OR
RESPONSIBLE ADULT:
PLEASE COMPLETE AN
INFORMATION, MEDICAL
RELEASE, PHOTO INFO FORM
FOR YOUR CHILD**

If you are the responsible adult of a child in our church, please take a moment to fill out an information, medical release, and photo permission form, so we can be sure to have up-to-date information. And if you have a kiddo in your life, invite them to come and learn with us this year! The release form is here:

<https://bit.ly/42i9vQ2>

If you would prefer to fill out a paper form, please drop by the office to pick up a form.



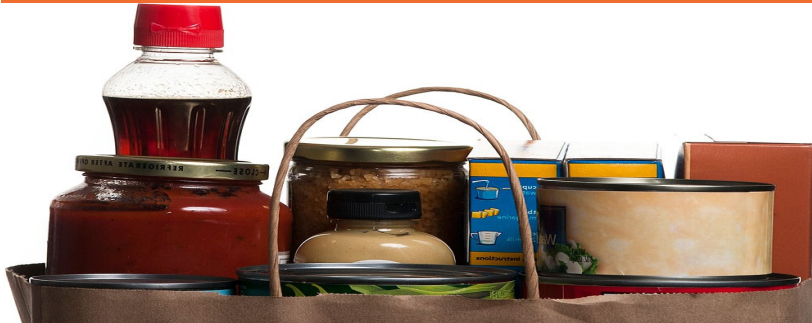


ONGOING OUTREACH

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!



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 2752 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>

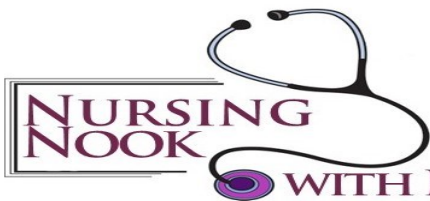
Questions? Contact Robyn Sommerfield at robysommerfield@gmail.com



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!



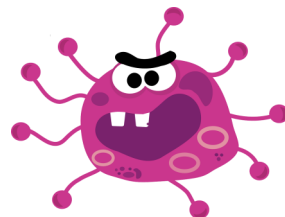
Kathy Henderson, RN • (540) 290-6396
covenantnurse@gmail.com
Contact Kathy with medical questions or
for a blood pressure check.

WITH KATHY HENDERSON, RN

One of the best health-care bargains around: Augusta Health's community wellness clinics. Next avail: Feb. 14, worth the trip despite unfriendly 7-10 a.m. hours. In addition to blood pressure checks and helpful hand-outs, AHC staff will perform stroke assessment, pulmonary function and carotid artery tests (often not covered by insurance). For \$10, you can have a cholesterol lipid screening. One caveat: You must make a reservation. . .call 540-245-7910.

Keeping the nasties at bay: We all know about filthy door handles and spigots in public restrooms, and I'm sure you remember to wipe down your cell phone daily And use hand sanitizer after using an ATM machine.

New to me: Plastic restaurant trays which the National Sanitation Foundation ranked among the highest bacteria-containing items in public spaces. "They were second only to kids' public park sandboxes – with 7,440 aerobic bacteria, yeast, and mold per gram – on par with school music instruments and movie theater video game controllers," according to a recent WebMd report.



Speaking of plastics: Phthalates ("thal-ayts") – those "forever chemicals" all over the news – really are ubiquitous. They're in our food containers, medicine cabinets, oceans, bloodstreams: Basically, anywhere we have plastic anything. Known as "endocrine disruptors," they have been linked to breast cancer, birth defects, lowered sperm counts. It's impossible to live a plastic-free life, but we can decrease our exposure. Avoid plastic food containers and wrap containing PVC, or the recycling label #3. Avoid reheating food in plastic containers. Read ingredient lists for cosmetics and personal care products. If you see: "Parfum," "fragrance," Di-n-butyl phthalate (**DBP**), Di-n-hexyl phthalate (**DnHP**), Diethyl phthalate (**DEP**)**10**, seek alternatives.

Find exactly what's in your favorite product at: <https://www.ewg.org/skindeep/>
For an in-depth look at phthalates and their impact, check out:
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8157593/>



**PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN**

**The women of Covenant Presbyterian Church
and women friends of the church will gather
for Bible Study and fellowship on Tuesday,
February 13, at 10:30 AM in the Breezeway.
Plan to join us. There's no FUN without U!**



**Looking for a place to serve?
The new year is a great time
to join a team!**

Find below the team chairpersons' names and contact information. Please get in touch with them if you have questions or would like to serve on their team. (Please note that we have several new chairs . . . indicated by the *)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| ♦ Tom Brooks
(Technology)*
tbrooks2828@gmail.com | ♦ Kristen Lambert
(Fellowship)
kristenlambert@comcast.net | ♦ Randy Smith
(Facilities)*
putzin15@gmail.com |
| ♦ Eileen Cooper
(Congregational Care)
ercooper1@hotmail.com | ♦ Rod Owen
(Personnel)
roderic.owen@gmail.com | ♦ Sarah Splaun
(Worship)*
splaunD2@gmail.com |
| ♦ Mandy Drumheller
(Preschool)*
amanda.neese@gmail.com | ♦ Joan Sayers
(Outreach)*
8917jts@gmail.com | ♦ Dan Summers-Minette
(Christian Formation)*
danminette@att.net |
| ♦ Chris Earhart
(Stewardship & Finance)
earhartc@dgocorp.com | | |

For more information about the teams and what they do, visit the church website at www.covenantpresstaunton.org/covenant-teams/



**FEBRUARY 14 -
MARCH 20
@ 6:00 PM
SOUP, SALAD,
AND BREAD**

The Covenant community is invited to attend TOW and pay what you will for dinner. We always offer a vegetarian option(s).

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

For each TOW, we need one host, people to bring soup or dessert, and two helpers to assist with clean up. Being a host involves picking up the bread and salad (you will be reimbursed), supervising dinner service and cleaning up afterwards. Sign up at <https://bit.ly/4bLOdVR> or call Martha at the church office.

JOIN US:

1. Bring a friend! TOW meals are more fun with new people to meet.
2. Make a reservation by noon on the Monday before the TOW you plan to attend so we know how many to prepare to feed. Sign up online at <https://bit.ly/3vMsQwm> **OR** sign the Friendship Pad in the pew on Sunday **OR** contact Martha at the church office at 540-885-2138.

We hope to see you at TOW!

FAMILY EVENT

ANNUAL

CHILI COOK-OFF & DESSERT BAKE-OFF

Those not wishing to compete
are encouraged to
bring cornbread to share!

FEBRUARY

11TH

Begins at

11:30 AM

#1
Best
Award

Sign-up for the competition or
register your attendance at:
<http://bit.ly/3Degy0y>

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
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
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The newsletter is published bi-weekly to
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The Connection newsletter is online at
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*



LENTEN WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Ash Wednesday Service in Sanctuary (no live stream)

Wednesday, February 14 at 7:00 PM

Lenten Taizé Services in the Sanctuary (no live stream)

Each Wednesday, February 21 thru March 20 at 7:00 PM

Maundy Thursday Service in the Sanctuary and Live Streamed

Thursday, March 28 at 7:00 PM

Easter Services in Sanctuary

Sunday, March 31 at 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM (live streamed)

Live streams can be viewed at

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