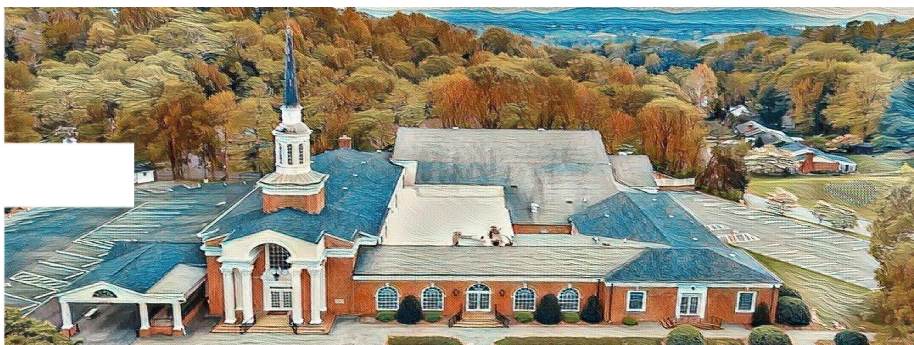


FEBRUARY 12, 2024
STAUNTON, VA



COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

From the Pastor's Desk

This year Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day. On one hand it seems an odd mix – ashes and valentines, repentance and love, ash gray and rose red (Ohio State fans find that a perfect match) – but there is perhaps something fitting in celebrating these two remembrances on the same day. For, Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday are both rooted in love – love for one another, our love for God, and God's love for us.

Valentine's Day was originally a religious holiday, a feast day honoring the lives of various St. Valentines. Today, it is for us a secular holiday marked by expressions of love (sponsored by the Association of Florists, Hallmark, and the Chocolate Coalition of America). On Valentine's Day we express our love for others through cards and flowers, chocolates and those little candy hearts of my youth (Be Mine! I luv U!) which may have been the precursors to text messaging.

Ash Wednesday begins our 40-day journey through Lent to Holy Week. It is a day marked by repentance, prayer, and self-reflection, a day to set out on a Lenten journey that will end at the cross and the empty tomb where God's great love for us is expressed in profoundly tangible ways. As ashes are imposed on our foreheads,

(continued on page 3)

What's INSIDE

Sunday Volunteers.....	2
Inquirers Class.....	2
Volunteers Needed.....	2
From the Pastor's Desk (contl).....	3
New Members.....	3
Children's Moments.....	3
Nursing Nook.....	4
Calendar.....	5
Prayer List/ Birthdays.....	6
Christian Formation.....	7
Ongoing Outreach.....	8
Presbyterian Women.....	9
CareGivers Group.....	9
Grief Support Group.....	9
Back Around the Clock.....	9
TOW Volunteers.....	10
Together on Wednesday.....	10
Jazz Concert.....	10
MRRJ Donation Recap.....	11
Lent Worship Schedule.....	back

VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG

Serving
GOD
Together



GREETERS

FEB. 18 -

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

10:30 AM....Tom Compton, Dan
Drumheller, Craig Whitacre

FEB. 25 -

8:30 AM....Bill von Seldeneck

10:30 AM....Charlie Huppuch,
Carol & Tom Jennings

NURSERY (10:30 AM)

FEB. 18 - Eileen Cooper, Cathy Ryan

FEB. 25 - Nina Gray

COVENANT KIDS (10:30 AM)

FEB. 18 - Kristin Gaffney, Jane Maxton

FEB. 25 - TBD

FLOWER COORDINATORS

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING

FEBRUARY - Paul Sorrell



Inquirer's
Class

Have you wondered who these Presbyterians are or how we differ from the tradition in which you grew up? Do you have questions about Covenant, what we believe, or why we do things the way that we do? If so, you are invited to join us for an Inquirers Class during the Sunday School hour (9:30-10:15) beginning February 18 in Room 5 in the Christian Education wing. The 6-week class will be led by John Peterson, and while it is oriented toward new members and those who may be considering joining, everyone is welcome.



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>



Greeters/Ushers Needed

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

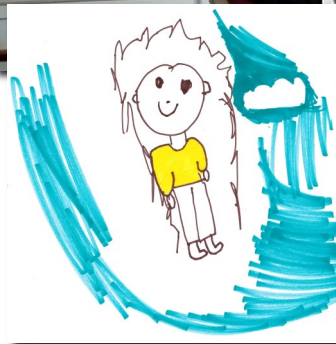
FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK (cont'd)

we commit to that journey; that commitment is itself an act of love for God. As ashes mark our foreheads, we are reminded that we are dust and to dust we shall return, but even as we recall that sobering truth, we are reminded of Paul's words that nothing, not even death, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Celebrating Ash Wednesday is an act of humble contrition, reminding us of our mortality, and it is an act of faith, bearing witness to our commitment to the God who loves us without end.

This year, I encourage you to observe both days on February 14. Observe Valentine's Day for the sake of those you love, and observe Ash Wednesday for the sake of the God who loves you. For in doing so, we live into the Great Commandment: Love God with all that you are, and love your neighbor as yourself!



On Sunday, January 28th during the 10:30 service, Laura Matheny; Douglas, Karen and Lily Watson; and Martin, Kara, Meredith and Madeleine Miller, were welcomed as new members in the Covenant family.

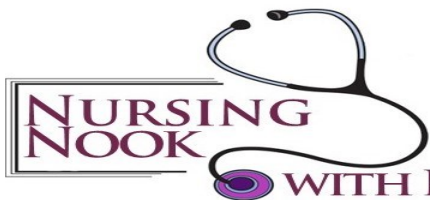


During Children's Moments at the 10:30 service on Sunday, February 4, the children helped John by drawing a picture of God.

Items for the next newsletter are due by **9:00 AM on Friday, February 23rd.**

Please email Martha at: covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com





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

WITH KATHY HENDERSON, RN



Chances are approximately 100 percent that we all know someone who is a caregiver. "Caregiving" is at best complicated: A difficult mix of love, practicality, guilt and fear that the care we're giving is not enough. The "ifs" and "buts" can be overwhelming for the estimated 53 million Americans currently serving as unpaid caregivers to spouses, relatives, and special needs children.

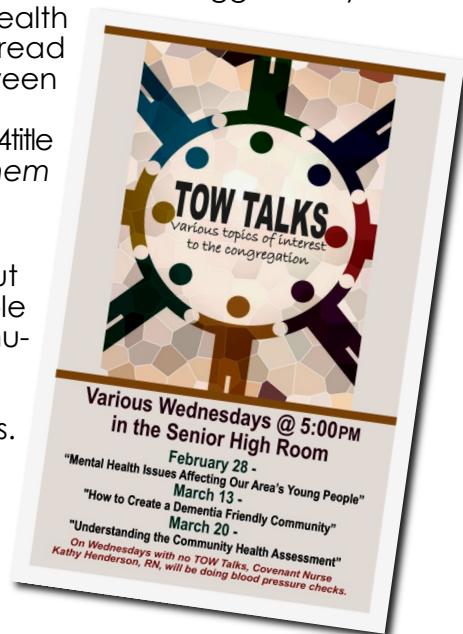
Friday is National Caregivers' Day, a chance to let caregivers know you appreciate their work. You can go big – a weekend at the beach while you assume caregiving duties – but, according to researchers, it's the "little things" that actually help. "You don't need to 'fix' anything; you just need to care and to validate their perspectives. . . Tell them it's OK to sometimes feel resentment, anger and frustration, along with the joy," one

wrote. Often, a hug, a shared moment of quiet or prayer (and an offer to clean the kitchen!) are really all that's needed.


There's even scientific evidence that stress-relieving encouragement can help caregivers maintain their own health. One NIH study found a strong correlation between the stress involved in caregiving (especially of special needs children) and the length of caregivers' telomeres. Telomeres cap the end of chromosomes and protect them from degradation: Shortened telomeres – often triggered by stress -- have been associated with several adverse health conditions and earlier mortality, the study posited. To read the complete study, check out "The Association Between Informal Caregiving and Cellular Aging,"

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4036217/#s4title>
Better yet, seek out a caregiver you know and give them a hug.

Mark your calendars: **TOW Talks will return in a few weeks.** Scheduled so far: An informal discussion about mental health issues affecting our area's young people (Feb. 28); how to create a "dementia friendly" community (March 13); and a look at what Augusta Heath's 2022 "Community Health Needs Assessment" showed us – and how its results have affected outreach efforts. (March 20). TOW Talks are at 5:00 pm in the Senior High Room.



FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	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
18 Blanket Sunday 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 CareGivers Group 7:00 PM STATED SESSION MEETING	19 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	20	21 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Taize Worship Service	22 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	23 9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline	24
25 4 Cents a Meal 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 Fellowship Team 11:45 AM Grief Support Group 2:00 PM Ice Skating	26 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	27 9:30 AM Presbytery Meeting	28 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Worship Service	29 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	MARCH 1	2



CHRISTIAN FORMATION

RACHEL WATSON • (540) 885-2138
revrachelwatson@gmail.com

There is a place for everyone in Christian Formation at Covenant! Whether you want to be a leader or learner, whether you are very young or have a lot of experience with life already, whether you know a lot about the Bible or you are just beginning to ask questions, we've got a place for you! If you have questions about how to get involved, contact Rachel!

Christian Formation Links are at the Covenant website:
www.covenantpresstaunton.org/christian-formation/

Weekday Events

Monday Morning Bible Study – We look at the text for the next Sunday's sermon. Come dive a little deeper into the story, share your insights, and get a head start on the next sermon. We meet at 10:30 AM in person in Room 6 and online via Zoom. Watch for the link sent out via opt-in every Sunday.

Presbyterian Women's Bible Study – This year's PW study is "Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke -Acts" by Olive Mahabir. All women are invited to come for fellowship and study at 10:30 AM on the second Tuesday of the month in the Breezeway.

Wired Word – Check out the Wired Word each week which provides a Christian perspective on current events. You can find the link above.

A NOTE FROM RACHEL —

Christian formation. It's more than classes and curriculum. It's about learning how to center ourselves in our Christian identity across our entire lifespan. It's about recognizing the journey of discipleship that threads throughout our lives, changing as we change and calling us into a life in the family of God. Sometimes we are the teachers. Sometimes we are the learners. Sometimes we are simply on the journey with each other. Regardless of how you take part, remember that the journey of faith formation is a lifelong process from which we never graduate. So as we head into Lent, I encourage you to consider where you might be called to participate in Christian Formation at Covenant, either as a student, teacher, teacher's helper, or study partner. There's a place for everyone at Covenant!

Sunday Christian Formation

Sunday School — The current unit for all classes is "Sing a New Song." Children, youth, and adults are learning about the multitude of ways songs connect us to God and the story of the people of God.

- **Children's Sunday School** – The children every Sunday morning at 9:30 in the preschool wing. There are classes for kids age 3 - grade 1 and grades 2 - 5.
- **Youth Sunday School** – The youth (grades 6 -12) are invited to gather for discussion and games on Sunday morning at 9:30 in the youth room.
- **Adult Sunday School** – This class meets in the fellowship hall at 9:30. All are invited and no prep is needed before you get there. Come and learn with us!

Youth Journeys and Faith Explorers –

Watch the newsletter for the monthly gatherings of the youth - the next one will be on March 10 and will be a Bible Trivia Game Day. All 6th - 12th graders are invited to join us on that Sunday from 11:45 -1:30 in the youth room.

Covenant Kids and Nursery - If you are interested in being a helper for a week or two in Covenant Kids or the Nursery, be sure to sign up by clicking the link on page 2 of this newsletter. You don't have to prepare the lesson, just come and be a caring set of hands! Many hands make light work as my grandma used to say and what a rich outpouring of love for our youngest disciples to see everyone gather round them in this way.



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 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 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!

The Church World Service Blanket campaign is an opportunity to blanket the world in love! Sunday, February 18 is Blanket Sunday at Covenant.



The CareGivers Group will meet immediately after the 10:30 service

on **Sunday, February 18th** 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 Ruth Arnold.



**Sunday, February 25th,
at 11:45AM in Room 5.**

Please join us as we explore goals for the year ahead.

Our group offers a welcoming and safe space to share, connect, and support each other.

We hope to see you there!



March 16, 2024

9:00 am - 9:00 pm

**Christ Lutheran Church
2807 North Augusta Street
Staunton, VA 24401**

A **free** community-wide marathon celebration of the music and majesty of Johann Sebastian Bach.

From sunup to sundown, you'll hear superb string soloists, renowned organists, guitarists, pianists, choirs, and brilliant ensembles, performing the inspiring and moving works of "the immortal god of harmony."

Organized by Heifetz International Music Institute
<https://heifetzinstitute.org/event/bach-around-the-clock-2024-free/>



HELPERS NEEDED

For each TOW, we need one host and two helpers to assist with clean up.

Being a host involved picking up the bread and salad (you will be reimbursed), supervising dinner service and clean up afterwards.

Sign up at:
<https://bit.ly/4bLOdVR>
or call the church office
(540-885-2138).



Wednesdays at 6:00 pm
in the Great Hall
February 14 - March 20

Menu:
Soup, Salad, & Bread

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 the church office at 540-885-2138.

At 7:00 pm after TOW, join us for Lent Worship Services in the Sanctuary.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH Stories, Music & Poetry

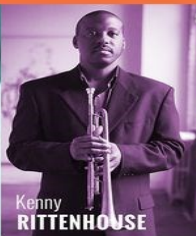
Set My Spirit Free

Jazz

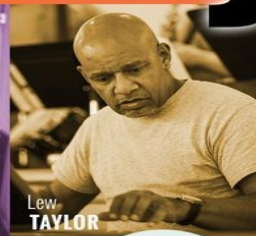
music's
SOUL
connection



Neal
PERRINE



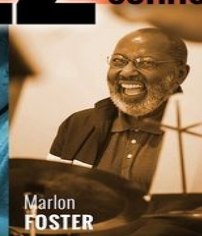
Kenny
RITTENHOUSE



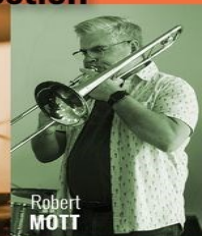
Lew
TAYLOR



Greg
MOODY



Marlon
FOSTER



Robert
MOTT



FEATURING
Dr. Edward Scott
Dr. Joanne Gabbin



Sunday, February 18, 2024
4 – 5:30 p.m.

Eastern Mennonite School Auditorium

**FREE
ADMISSION**

MRRJ COAT DRIVE UPDATE

Through the generosity of the people of Covenant, many cold weather items and hygiene items were recently delivered to the Middle River Regional Jail (MRRJ). Here's a tally of items collected:

Women's vest - 1
 Women's Coats - 8
 Women's fleece jackets - 2
 Women's boots - 1 pair
 Men's jackets - 5
 Men's vests and sweaters - 8
 Men's coats - 13
 Men's shoes - 2 pair
 Hygiene kits - 16



Also, many miscellaneous hygiene items, including tons of lip balm! Plus innumerable caps, scarves, gloves, and socks!



Thanks to everyone at Covenant for the generous support of people just starting to rebuild their lives after doing time in jail. We pray that God's grace and strength be with them as they seek to regain successful and useful new lives in this community.

Mr. John Lilly, Chief of Programs at MRRJ, was most appreciative. He mentioned again that he is available for future conversation with us about the needs of people beginning reentry in our area.

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 Wzalek

Organist

Lou Dolive

Handbell Director

Katherine McLean

Director of Children's Music

Miltzi 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
Presbyterian
Church
PO Box 2948
Staunton, VA 24402

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #188
STAUNTON, VA

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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/