

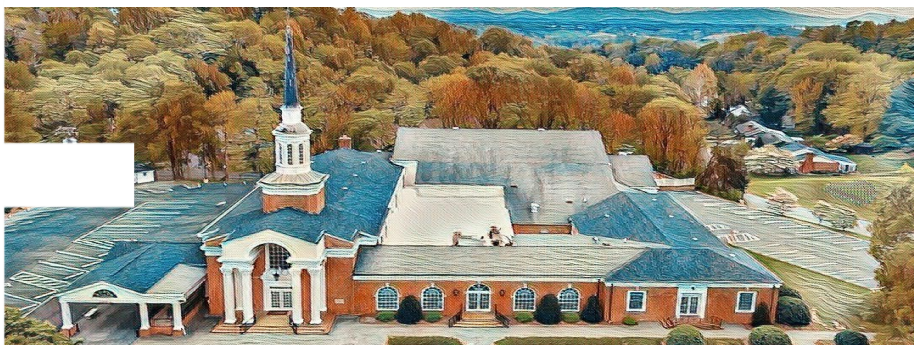
MARCH 11, 2024
STAUNTON, VA

I was hungry and you
gave me food,
I was thirsty and you
gave me something to drink.
Matthew 25:35, NRSV



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COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

From the Pastor's Desk

As one of my Lenten disciplines this year I have been fasting on Wednesdays until our TOW dinner of soup and bread together in the evening. It is remarkable how that simple act brings to mind the Lenten season and compassion for our neighbors and needs throughout the day. We are used to eating when we want to eat without concern about whether we will have enough or anything at all to eat. Most of us do not have to battle hunger each day, if ever. This act of fasting on Wednesdays has offered me a glimpse, nothing more, of what so much of the world experiences day to day and hour by hour.

In Gaza right now the United Nations is concerned about mass starvation as people displaced from their homes by the war have access to little or no food. In many other parts of the world, climate change has destroyed crops through drought, floods, or storms that have left whole populations food insecure. Within some of our cities, there are food deserts where no healthy food is available. Significant numbers of children in our community receive free lunches that are their best, or perhaps only, meal of the day. All of which is to say that we take for granted our daily

(continued on page 3)

VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG

Serving
GOD
Together



GREETERS

MAR. 17 -

8:30 AM....Jeanne & Mick Lambert
10:30 AM....Jim Britton, Dan
Drumheller, Randy Smith

MAR. 24 -

8:30 AM....**Volunteer needed**
10:30 AM....Dan Drumheller, Randy
Smith, Janet Surratt

NURSERY (10:30 AM)

MAR. 17 - **Volunteer needed**

MAR. 24 - **Volunteer needed**

COVENANT KIDS (10:30 AM)

MAR. 17 - Kristin Gaffney
volunteer helper needed

MAR. 24 - **Volunteers needed**

FLOWER COORDINATORS

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING

MARCH - Tom Bellamy



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>

TO OUR VISITORS

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



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>



Join us
on Saturday, March 16,
at 9:00AM for
Spring Clean-Up!

Help us get the interior of the church ready for Easter!

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK (cont'd)

bread while so many other folks go hungry. Fasting one day a week has brought that reality to my consciousness in a very visceral way!

Here at Covenant, we try to meet the needs of hungry folks in our community in various ways. Teams cook and serve meals at Trinity Soup Kitchen each month. We deliver food from the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank to Hispanic families. Each month we collect a Four Cents Per Meal offering and food for the Verona Food Pantry. In our annual budget, we support Meals on Wheels, Valley Mission, SCS Nutrition Program, Jones Garden, Verona Food Pantry, Project Grows, SACRA, and our Hispanic food distribution. We are trying to make a difference where we are with what we have, and while it may seem like just a drop in an ocean of hunger, to those we help it makes a huge difference!

As you sit down to your next meal or grab a snack on the run, pause to consider two things: gratitude to God for what you have and a commitment to do what you can to feed someone else down the street, across the county, or around the world. For as Jesus reminds us: it is in serving them that we serve him!



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

Please email Martha at: covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com



SPRING Egg Hunt

Sunday, March 24
@ 3:00 PM

Gather in the Great Hall
for lots of fun including a magician & games!
"Hunting" areas designated
by age groups.

Please sign-up at:
<https://bit.ly/3uxk0IX>

**Each child should bring
their own basket!**

**Donations are being accepted for
individually- wrapped candy (no nuts).
Drop off candy in the specially-marked
box near the church office.**

Missionary UPDATE

FROM FAITH'S HEART — Jan. 2024 Update
(Crystal & Raphael)

What are IDPs? IDPs are Internally Displaced People. Like refugees, they have fled violence or natural disasters, but they remain within the borders of their own countries. Gurku Interfaith IDP Camp, set up in 2014, is situated just outside Abuja and is one of over 300 such camps in Nigeria. About 2,000 people (both Christian and Muslim, mainly widows and orphans) are currently housed at Gurku, having been displaced by the cruel terror of Boko Haram. Most will never be able to return to what was once home.






We were introduced to the founder and director of this camp, Markus Gamache, during the Christmas Eve service at the German church in town, when they were taking up a special offering for the camp. When we heard that most of the women there were involved in agriculture, we thought, "We've got to invite him to learn about pfumvudza! It's perfect for IDPs who don't have access to much land!" The director attended our training in January and is so excited about the possibilities of empowerment for his community that he has already invited us to come and do a one-day training to teach the IDPs how to make compost for their farms. We continue to be humbled and amazed as God keeps surprising us with ways that planting corn is helping us to preach Christ into some of the darkest corners of the country.

Click here to Meet Markus and hear how conservation agriculture is helping him to help his community: <https://bit.ly/MeetMarkusGamache>

EDITORS NOTE: Pfumvudza, pronounced foom-vood-za and literally meaning "new season", is a sustainable farming technique developed by a local non-profit organization in Zimbabwe as a way to ensure food security for a family of six for a year on just 1/16 the amount of land they would normally farm. This involves precision planting at the proper time, crop rotation, and deep mulching to retain moisture and keep weeds down.

MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
17  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 Care Givers Group 7:00 PM STATED SESSION MEETING	18 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	19 10:30 AM Presbyterian Women 5:30 PM Preschool Team 7:00 PM Stewardship & Finance Team	20 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway 5:00 PM TOW Talk 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Taize Worship Service	21 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	22 9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline	23 10:00 AM Confirmation Class Church Visit to Temple House of Israel
24 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 3:00 PM Spring Egg Hunt	25 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	26	27 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway	28 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Service  <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	29	30
16 9:00 AM Spring Cleanup 	17 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	18 10:30 AM Presbyterian Women 5:30 PM Preschool Team 7:00 PM Stewardship & Finance Team	19 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway 5:00 PM TOW Talk 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Taize Worship Service	20 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	21 9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline	22 10:00 AM Confirmation Class Church Visit to Temple House of Israel



Mouthwatering Mondays

On Monday, March 4, at the Boys & Girls Club, fifteen kids, along with numerous adult volunteers, gathered at the Booker T. Community Center in Staunton. The kids made and ate coconut date balls and humus with veggies. They also had an opportunity to use power tools to make birdhouses.

In collaboration with Project Grows, these events provide fun, educational activities and hands-on opportunities for cooking and tasting healthy foods. The kids also work on projects to help them learn technical skills and to give them experience and confidence to pursue technical interests as they grow.

The next "Mouthwatering Monday" is on April 22nd. You can sign up to help at <https://bit.ly/3lr3S>



Volunteer with Verona Community Food Pantry

Peanut butter comes to mind when thinking of the Verona Food Pantry. Did you know you can also serve as a volunteer there also? Several Covenant members help out regularly. It's easy!

Stop by the Pantry and ask for Cecil Wright or Ike Moore. You can observe volunteer activities and complete a volunteer form.

HOURS OF SERVICE:

Mon, Wed, and Thurs, 9:00 AM -11:00 AM
Tues, 4:30 PM to 5:45 PM

ADDRESS:

68 Dick Huff Lane, Verona, VA

The Verona Food Pantry began 20 years ago to provide food to those in need. They always need volunteers and lovingly welcome more help.

For more information visit: veronafoodpantry.org



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.



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>

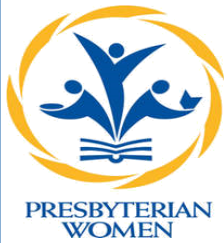
Questions? Contact Robyn Sommerfield at robysommerfield@gmail.com



SHELBURNE PANTRY UPDATE

The **urgent need for the pantry** are **hygiene items** (shampoo, conditioner, liquid body wash, deodorant, and shaving razors) and **canned vegetables, canned fruits, and soups**. 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!



Presbyterian Women will gather on Tuesday, March 12 at 10:30 AM in the Breezeway for Bible Study and fellowship. All women are Presbyterian Women, and all are welcome.

Lynn Grimm is facilitating a conversation about the sacred encounter when Philip meets an Ethiopian man who is a eunuch. The Ethiopian is reading from the great prophet, Isaiah, when the men meet. Imagine the conversation! Philip is an evangelist and the man he encounters is a non-Jew serving in the Queen's court who owns a scroll from the Torah, a highly prized possession indeed. Philip asks if the man understands what he is reading, and the man says that he does not. So, Philip and the Ethiopian begin what we would call Bible Study!

Plan to join the Bible Study March 12.
All women are welcome!



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.



Sunday, March 24th,
at 11:45AM in Room 5.

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

We hope to see you there!



The CareGivers Group will meet immediately

after the 10:30 service on

Sunday, March 17th

in Room 5. Anyone caring for a loved one who would like to talk with others in similar situations is invited to come.

For more information, please contact Ruth Arnold.



TOW TALKS
Various topics of interest
to the congregation

**Various Wednesdays @ 5:00PM
in the Senior High Room**

March 13 -
"Becoming a Dementia Friend"

March 20 -
"Intersection of Community Outreach & Population Health"

*On Wednesdays with no TOW Talks, Covenant Nurse
Kathy Henderson, RN, will be doing blood pressure checks.*



Join us for
Together on Wednesday
GOOD FOOD / GREAT FELLOWSHIP

**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 Lenten Taizé
Worship Services in the Sanctuary.**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR TWO INTERESTING & INFORMATIVE TOW TALKS.

This week (**March 13 @ 5:00 PM**), Janice Gentry, director of senior services at Valley Program for Aging Services, and Muffie Newell, Assistant for Formation and Pastoral Care at Trinity Episcopal Church, will walk us along the path to becoming a "Dementia Friend." I've attended this fascinating talk once – and very much look forward to this week's "review."

We'll close out this season's series next week (**March 20 @ 5:00 PM**) with an in-depth look at how Augusta Health's 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment has affected the hospital's "Intersection of Community Outreach and Population Health." The wide-ranging discussion will be led by Dr. Clint Merritt, AHC's chief physician officer, and Krystal Moyers, AHC's administrative director of community outreach and partnerships. If you want to explore the CHNA before attending, check out: <https://www.augustahealth.com/service/community-outreach/community-health-needs-assessment/>
The study is very detailed – 257 pages – but has a user-friendly index and provides hundreds of useful factoids about our region's health issues.

— Kathy Henderson, RN, Covenant Nurse

EVACE International

A week in Pilar



Meningiocele patient one year after 16 Manila-trained surgeons from the US donated their services last year to repair Vince Kyle's spinal cord defect and facial complications. He will receive plastic surgery after his bones stop growing.



Our all-volunteer medical staff

Oliver working with EVTEC computer students



Thank you Covenant for your generosity



Our "miracle baby" Asher born to a long-term thyroid patient—requiring a cardiologist at delivery



You wouldn't believe the way patients' faces lit up as Tums were dispensed!



Skin rashes and UTIs are rampant because of fresh water supply issues on Ponson Island

Oliver and I visited EVACE Pilar in the Philippines for a week in February and witnessed our all-volunteer medical professionals treat the normal ailments (hyper-and hypo-thyroidism, diabetes, hypertension, cough/cold), plus leprosy, shingles, both fresh and festering wounds, malnutrition, persistent nose bleed, indigestion, rashes and UTIs. A diet of mainly white rice complemented by pork, chicken and iodine laden shell fish, but largely devoid of fiber and essential nutrients, leads to many of the ailments we treat. Other issues are related to the consistently poor quality and availability of fresh, clean water, due largely to local politics.

We also spent hours in our computer resource center with young students. One of the boys who is bored in math class at school has been coming to watch videos on Calculus! We are starting a typing class for adults in March.

Lastly, we worked to compile statistics from years of medical records to aid in planning and fund-raising. It was eye opening to everyone involved.

Thank you Covenant for your continued support through donations and Glorious Gifts.

— Warmly, Cary Dahl

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mailing Address:

PO Box 2948, Staunton, VA 24402

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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

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
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The Connection newsletter is online at
www.covenantpresstaunton.org.

COVENANT



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



LENTEN WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Lenten Taizé Service in the Sanctuary (no live stream)

Each Wednesday through March 20 at 7:00 PM

Palm Sunday Services in the Sanctuary:

Sunday, March 24 at 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM (live streamed)

Maundy Thursday Service in the Sanctuary

Thursday, March 28 at 7:00 PM (live streamed)

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/