

# COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

APRIL 8, 2024  
STAUNTON, VA

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

Last month I received a phone call from a young Mennonite couple looking for a location for their wedding. They live over an hour away but had been unable to find a church large enough to accommodate their guests that would also allow their pastor to officiate at the service. We could meet their needs. About that same time, we were hosting for a week a group from the University of Maryland who were working with Renewing Homes Augusta for their spring break.

When we decided to expand our facilities significantly in 2000, we emphasized that this expansion was not just for our use, but also to share with the community. Our facilities have been wonderful for our worship, Christian Formation programs, preschool, choir practices, Together on Wednesday meals, spring egg hunts, and various other church meetings and gatherings. But we built it all to be shared with our neighbors. Who are some of the neighbors with whom we share this space?

- ◆ The Augusta Bird Club meets monthly in our Fellowship Hall.
- ◆ The NAACP holds their community prayer breakfast and Freedom Banquet in our Great Hall.
- ◆ A small Narcotics Anonymous group for medical providers meets here weekly.

*(continued on page 3)*



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

Serving  
**GOD**  
Together



### **GREETERS**

APR. 14 -

8:30 AM....Janice & Rae Rockwell  
10:30 AM....Dan Drumheller,  
Sally & Jonathan Griffith

APR. 21 -

8:30 AM....Janice & Rae Rockwell  
10:30 AM....Harry & Sarah Boney,  
Janet Surratt

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

APR. 14 - **Volunteer needed**

APR. 21 - **Volunteer needed**

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

APR. 14 - Reagan Gwaltney

APR. 21 - Kristin Gaffney,  
**helper needed**

### **FLOWER COORDINATORS**

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

### **CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING**

APRIL -- Kent Diduch



## 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.



## **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>

*With Sympathy*

Please keep in your prayers the family of Tom Cook who died in Florida on Monday, March 18.

Please also keep in your prayers the family of Nancy Whitmore who died on Saturday, March 23, at UVA Hospital.

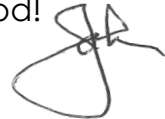
May God grant them eternal rest and grant to their families comfort and peace.

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

- ◆ SACRA holds its board meetings and annual meeting here.
- ◆ Martha's Meals on Wheels held their Anniversary Celebration in our Great Hall and meets as a board in our Fellowship Hall.
- ◆ The YMCA uses our field for soccer and t-ball practices from time to time.
- ◆ A yoga group works out in the Breezeway each week.
- ◆ Helping Hands offers a week of activities for children in the summer each year.
- ◆ The Thursday Morning Music Club often offers recitals in our sanctuary. (They meet on Thursday morning as Virginia Wetzel always reminded me!)
- ◆ Various other community groups, organizations, and homeowners' associations with Covenant connections meet here from time to time.
- ◆ Oak Grove Theater held auditions for plays here last month and often uses our space for play rehearsals in the spring and summer.
- ◆ The University Singers from UVA holds their day and/or overnight retreats here.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive (or exhausting), but is intended to illustrate how we share our space with the community. Most of the organizations have Covenant connections.

All are non-profits. In sharing our space, we seek to be good stewards of our facilities, good neighbors to our community, and faithful disciples in God's service! We who have been so blessed, seek to bless others. That is why we built it! That is why we share it – to the glory of God!



## Paper & Cleaning Products Drive for Valley Mission April 7 - 21



Please help the Outreach Team with this collection drive by bringing any of the products listed below. Place products in the big white box in the vestibule area by the church office.

- Toilet paper
- Toilet cleaner
- Paper towels
- Paper cups
- Napkins
- Kleenex / tissues
- Clorox / bleach
- Pinesol
- Mr. Clean
- Sponges
- Liquid hand cleaner

Items for the next newsletter are due by **9:00 AM on Friday, April 19th.**

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





**Let's Gather Together on Wednesday in April!** We will continue to **gather for a shared meal each week at 6:00 pm.**

- **If you want to host or assist**, sign up: [www.bit.ly/3Pxon7V](http://www.bit.ly/3Pxon7V)
- **If you plan to attend**, there are three ways to reserve a seat. Please register to by noon on the Monday prior to the TOW you plan to attend.
  1. Sign up at [www.bit.ly/3TPsvCB](http://www.bit.ly/3TPsvCB)
  2. Sign the Friendship Register on Sunday morning
  3. Call the church office at 540-885-2138

Then, after sharing a meal, we will **gather for intergenerational and interactive worship at 7:00 pm.**

Following the models of Daily Evening Prayer and Godly Play, we will hear a Bible story that explores how we all fit into the beautiful story of the people of God and wonder together. Then we will respond with songs, art, play, storytelling, and more before coming back together to be sent out into the world to be a blessing. It's worship in a new way! This worship is meant for people of all ages – there is something for everyone and a multitude of ways for us to learn from each other! So whether you come with kids or grandkids (or nephews, nieces, or neighbors) in tow or, come on your own seeking a new way to connect with the Word of God, you are very welcome and wanted at this table! Come and wonder with us!

**"THANKS!"**



To the Church Community — On behalf of Alternative Breaks and UMD, we wanted to sincerely thank you for your hospitality

and kindness this past week. The church served as a wonderful home away from home. Your gratuitous donations of desserts and the soup dinner kept us incredibly fed. The soup and bread dinner followed by the service was a really nice evening. Thank you for frequently stopping by and chatting with all of us. Your valuable advice and experiences helped us better understand the history and circumstances surrounding Staunton, allowing us to better serve the community and Renewing Home for Greater Augusta. We couldn't have asked for better hosts. Thank you!

— Justin Ma, Bradley Phelps, Leonard Fomin, Jeffery Chao, Sandra Yen, Chloe Cartwright, Bart Hipple



#### **EDITOR'S NOTE:**

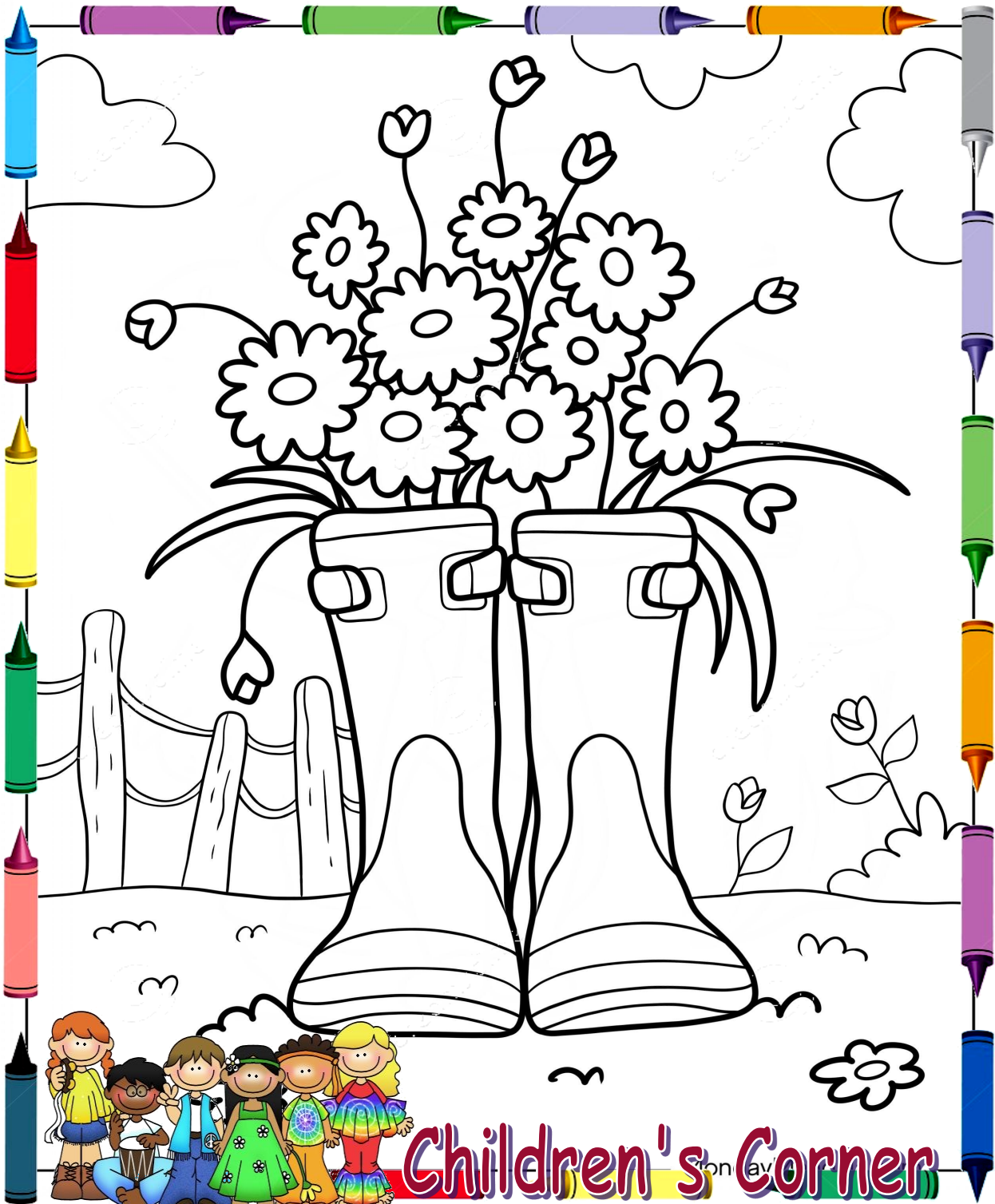
Covenant hosted 6 students and one administrator from the University of Maryland (UMD) during the week of March 16-23.

#### **From Renewing Homes E-News:**

One wheelchair ramp, two entrance decks and steps, drywall finishing, ceiling repair, and clearing rubble from a burned garage were the tangible results of our time with these young people. They left with a toolbelt of new skills and greater understanding of community service. Hear what these visiting volunteers had to say about their experience with RHGA. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELhAugMRahY>

# A.P.R.I.L

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>8</b> <b>COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED</b> 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 5:30 PM Endowment Committee	<b>9</b> 9:30 AM PW Coordinating Team 10:30 AM Presbyterian Women 5:30 PM Preschool Team	<b>10</b> 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Intergenerational Activity	<b>11</b> 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>12</b> 10:00 AM Novels & Needles Book Group	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:15 AM Alpha Choir 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:00 AM Confirmation Class to Allen Chapel AIME 11:45 AM Omega Choir 11:45 AM Christian Formation Team	<b>15</b> 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 7:00 PM Personnel Team 	<b>16</b> 7:00 PM Stewardship & Finance Team	<b>17</b> 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Intergenerational Activity	<b>18</b> 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>19</b> 8:00 AM Executive Team 9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline 11:45 AM Lunch with the Boys	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 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 11:45 AM Confirmation Class 7:00 PM STATE SESSION MEETING	<b>22</b> <b>COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED</b> 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Intergenerational Activity	<b>25</b> 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>



Children's Corner

## 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

### MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH PLASTIC BAGS

**THANK YOU, COVENANT!** We have kept over **2866 pounds** of plastic out of the landfills. **AND** we've provided benches to the Boys and Girls Club. 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)



### HELP SUPPLY THE SHELburnE PANTRY

The **most needed items** for the pantry are **hygiene products** such as **shampoo, conditioner, liquid body wash, deodorant, and shaving razors**, as well as foods such as **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.



From Children's Moments on Easter Sunday!  
Learning about "Alleluia" and what it means.



PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN

**DATE AND TIME:**

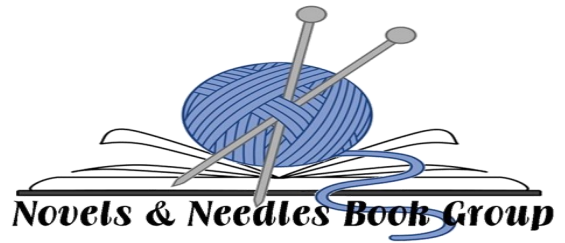
Tuesday, April 9,  
at 10:30 AM

**LOCATION:**

Breezeway

**WHAT:** Fellowship and  
Bible Study

Women of the church, please put  
this information on your calendar.  
Linda Foster is leading the Bible  
Study lesson about Lydia and her  
sacred encounter with Jesus in  
worship. You will be so glad you  
participated. There is no FUN with-  
out U!



**Novels & Needles Book Group**

Novels & Needles Book Club  
will meet at 10:00 AM on  
Friday, April 12th  
in the Breezeway.

The book being discussed is  
***The Last Green Valley***  
by Mark Sullivan

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!



The CareGivers  
Group will meet  
immediately

after the 10:30 service on  
**Sunday, April 21st**

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.



**Sunday, April 28th,  
at 11:45AM in Room 5.**

We meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each  
month immediately after the 10:30  
service. We will continue to explore  
ways to navigate the emotions,  
experiences, and questions of grief  
in order to move forward in our  
individual grief journeys.  
We hope you can join us!



Joe Dockery & The African-American Heritage Festival Foundation  
together present the:

# FISK JUBILEE SINGERS



**Saturday, April 13**  
3:00pm & 7:30pm

**Central United Methodist Church**  
14 N. Lewis St.  
Staunton

Tickets: \$25 Available at: [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) or call 540-292-3732



Booker T. Washington H.S.  
Alumni Association, Inc.



Joe Dockery  
MaryLynne Dockery

Rev. Dr. Edward Scott  
Rev. Andrea Cornett-Scott



PEASON  
FINANCIAL GROUP

Kent Massie



Rebecca Shircliff  
Peter Palmer

## Why are the Birthdates Gone?

The more we connect and share our lives together online, the more we have to be intentional about what information we share. Our birthdates are indeed very special and are often used as verification of identity in an increasingly technological world. Recognizing this, the Technology Team requested that the Session consider removing the birthdates from the newsletter in an attempt to be good stewards of your personal information. . . and the Session, with heavy hearts, agreed. Rest assured that we will continue to list all those who are celebrating a birthday during the current month so you can share birthday wishes with them!



## Breaking Bread to Build Bridges

making connections to meet community needs



Housing ★ Homelessness ★ Voter Registration ★ Minority Business Development ★ Uniontown Future

**Saturday April 27, 2024**

1:00-3:00 pm

Booker T Washington Community Center  
1114 West Johnson Street, Staunton

Connect with others to learn how you can achieve your own goals – and to explore how we can work together to meet everyone's needs. *We are stronger together!*

If you can, please bring a pie or homemade bread to share



# Spring Egg Hunt

## EGG - STRAVAGANZA



Fabulous 50 degree weather was in store for the Annual Spring Egg Hunt on Sunday afternoon, March 24th. There was egg-citement in the air as about 30 attendees hunted nearly 400 eggs. Fun was had by all! The youth gathered earlier to enjoy some pizza, fellowship, and the all important duties of stuffing and hiding the eggs. Rachel Watson planned two cute and creative crafts . . . marble painted eggs and thumbprint lambs. The marvelous magician Jim Oberg dazzled the children with his wonderful tricks. Thank you to Seth Ward, Melissa Blinn, Susie Oberg, as well as the rest of the church congregation and fellowship team who helped plan and support this event.

— Kristen Lambert,  
Chair of the Fellowship Team



## 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  
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:  
Worshipping with Joy, Growing in Faith, Serving in Love*

## 11th Annual Ecumenical National Day of Prayer Observance

**When:** May 2, 2024 at 11:30AM

**Where:** Fellowship Hall at First Baptist Church,  
301 South Wayne Ave, Waynesboro

**Cost:** \$13/person for catered luncheon

To secure your reservation, make your check payable to First Baptist Church and send to  
Charlie Downs at 109 Gloucester Court, Waynesboro, VA 22980.

Please put "Prayer Luncheon" in the memo line.

**Deadline to register is April 18.**



Our guest speaker will be Dr. Earl Pendleton, who has been senior pastor at Union Baptist Church in Waynesboro, VA since 2023. Dr. Pendleton is a graduate of Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology. He is active in the community and has served on several boards in Central Virginia.

Our program will be led by members of Union Baptist Church. Dr. Pendleton will speak on Acts 27:43-44 - "Safe on Broken Pieces."



## SPRING GALA for BAJA May 2, 2024 / 6:30 - 8:30 PM

PAY WHAT YOU WILL EVENT

Ox Eye Vineyard Tasting Room  
44 Middlebrook Avenue, Staunton

Special culinary tastings from the Oaxacan Region of Mexico  
and a Conversation about the Cuisine Provided by James Harris.

Non-alcoholic beverages and lite bites provided;  
wine available for purchase.

We can't wait to share this experience with you!

In Support of the Baja Mission Trip  
Building Houses and Memories to Last a Lifetime

For more information, please contact Robyn Sommerfield.