

# COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

May 6, 2024  
STAUNTON, VA

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

Protests on college campuses in our nation and beyond concerning the war in Gaza have sparked a multitude of reactions and some uncomfortable memories of protests on college campuses in the 1960s. What are we as Christians to say about these events that center on a conflict between Palestinians and Israelis half a world away?

Perhaps the first thing to be said is that this is not at heart a religious conflict. The state of Israel does not speak or act for Judaism or the Israel of the Bible; it is a modern state that has its own political and national interests. Neither does Hamas speak for any one religion or for all Palestinians; many are Muslim, but not all. They reflect political and national interests related to eviction from their homes with the creation of the state of Israel and their aspirations for a nation of their own. There are Jews joining in the protests against the Israeli government's actions in Gaza, and there are Palestinians appalled at the actions of Hamas who are calling for release of the hostages.

Secondly, while the majority of the protests are peaceful, those garnering the headlines are the protestors who have crossed the line from peaceful dissent to violence, destruction, and anti-Semitic rhetoric and actions. We should support those who are calling for an end to war, release of the hostages, delivery of food to the hungry to alleviate

*(continued on page 3)*



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VISIT US ONLINE AT

[WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG](http://WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG)

Serving  
**GOD**  
Together



### **GREETERS**

MAY 12 -

8:30 AM....Jeanne & Mick Lambert  
10:30 AM....Dan Drumheller,  
Janet Surratt

MAY 19 -

8:30 AM....Bill von Seldeneck  
10:30 AM....Janet Surratt

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

MAY 12 - **Volunteer needed**

MAY 19 - **Volunteer needed**

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

MAY 12 - Anne Bell

MAY 19 - Kristin Gaffney

### **FLOWER COORDINATORS**

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

### **CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING**

MAY -- Adam Campbell



## Monday Morning Bible Study

Join us on Mondays at 10:30 AM  
The last study for this session will be May 20th.

We will meet again in the Fall.

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 meet **in person** in Room 6 **and** also offer this meeting **virtually** through Zoom. A link to the Zoom meeting is 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>

## Ushers/Greeters Needed



Help is always needed!

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

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

suffering, and a plan forward for peace that respects the lives of all. We should be a voice calling for justice for those who have suffered losses, those who have been driven from their homes by the brutal attacks by Hamas, the indiscriminate bombing by Israel, and the denial of access to food, water, and medicines for displaced Palestinians. As so often is the case, it is the innocent who suffer, and we should be righteously angry at the callous disregard for human life on both sides of this conflict.

Thirdly, we should support those who make their voices heard through peaceful protest and hold accountable those who cross the line into intimidation, racist rhetoric, violence, and destructive behavior. At times, peaceful protests have been coopted by outside agitators with their own agendas, but it is also the case that some protestors have been carried away by anger to act unjustly or illegally, and they should face consequences for their actions.

Finally, we should be praying for a resolution, and not simply ignoring the conflict as if it were of no consequence to us. These are our brothers and sisters who are suffering, and we should seek to alleviate the suffering where we can. Sometimes, the best that we can do is simply to pray, and so we should pray!

It can be tempting in this conflict, as in so many others, to make this a black and white issue without recognizing the nuances of the problems and the

varied interests of those involved. Hamas's attack was unconscionable as is Israel's response that has killed so many innocent people, including thousands of children. We should demand better from all sides, including ourselves, and pray for a just peace that will bring an end to the violence and allow all the people to live in peace, for that is the dream of most of the folks involved in this conflict. May God grant them that peace soon, and lest we be guilty of hypocrisy ourselves, may we be instruments of justice and peace where we are day by day.



## CELEBRATION OF *Life*

A memorial service for Tom Cook, who passed away on March 18, 2024, will be held on Saturday, May 11th at 2:00 PM at Mt. Horeb Presbyterian Church.

Items for the next newsletter are due by **9:00 AM on Friday, May 17th.**

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





Bridgewater College marked its observance of Founder's Day on Tuesday, April 2, and presented awards to 3 faculty members for their excellence in teaching and scholarship, 2 staff members for dedicated service, and one student for academic excellence. One of those recipients is congregation member Amanda Campbell. Below is the write up about her from the Bridgewater College website: [www.bridgewater.edu/events-news/news/bridgewater-college-announces-2024-founders-day-awards/](http://www.bridgewater.edu/events-news/news/bridgewater-college-announces-2024-founders-day-awards/)

### **Ben and Janice Wade Outstanding Teaching Award**

*Dr. Amanda Campbell, Professor in the Department of Health and Human Sciences, joined the Bridgewater College faculty in 2007. She received a B.S. in health and physical education from James Madison University in 2001 and a M.Ed. in adapted physical education in 2002 and a Ph.D. in education—kinesiology in 2012, both from the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education. Campbell's research has focused on barriers to childhood physical activity, especially in schools, and the accessibility of physical education for individuals with disabilities. She teaches courses on health and physical education, teaching methods and assessment and currently serves as coordinator for the Health and Physical Education Teacher Education Program. Campbell is also co-founder of the Shenandoah Valley Inclusive Wellness Coalition, a platform to connect individuals with disabilities, caregivers and wellness organizations to improve access and increase opportunities for physical activity.*

**CONGRATULATIONS, AMANDA!  
WELL DONE!**



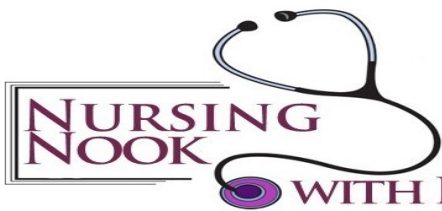
**“I am coming to you.”**

Christ shared these simple but powerful words to assure us that He will always be at our side. This is the hope and inspiration that carries us forward, and is fundamental to our faith. Instilling this understating is a gift we pass to our children. The Pentecost Offering helps our youth begin life with a strong start in the years from childhood through young adulthood that will last a lifetime. This special offering unites Presbyterians in support of young people sharing their faith, ideas, and gifts with the Church and the world. How your offering breaks down:

- ◆ Forty (40) percent stays with our congregation to support ministries with children, youth, and young adults.
- ◆ Twenty-five (25) percent supports ministries with youth including the Presbyterian Youth Triennium.
- ◆ Twenty-five (25) percent supports young adult volunteers (YAV), serving in communities around the world, and growing leaders through transformative Christian service.
- ◆ Ten (10) percent is devoted to children at risk to improve education and provide safe havens.

Ways to give:

- ◆ Use the envelopes in the May 19th bulletins. Simply write out your check made out to “Covenant” with the words “Pentecost” on the memo line.
- ◆ Text PENTECOST to 91999
- ◆ Give online at [pcusa.org/give/Pentecost](http://pcusa.org/give/Pentecost)



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

## WITH KATHY HENDERSON, RN

Quick quiz: How many prescription medicines do you have – and what are their names? Add in any over-the-counter supplements you use regularly. Is your total higher than five? **You've got polypharmacy!**

Technically, **polypharmacy** refers to the simultaneous use of five or more prescription medications. While some in the medical field insist that the term applies only to prescribed meds, others are adamant that OTCs and herbal supplements need to be included.

We all “know” older Americans take a lot of pills: The NIH tells us that more than 44 percent of those over 65 currently take five or more physician-prescribed medicines (plus an unknown number of over-the-counter meds), a 95 percent increase over the past 20 years.

Polypharmacy also increased among the middle-aged, with almost 16 percent of those 40-64 years old now having five or more prescriptions, another 95 percent increase. Reasons cited for this increase vary: Older Americans see an average of five different doctors/specialists a year. We have better diagnostic tools for recognizing cardiac, cancer and other chronic issues. Big Pharma is relentless in its advertising. How do we avoid potential disasters?

- ◆ Remember that the electronic medical records of various institutions/physician offices often do not interface. If you have access to them, check your meds lists regularly and notify them of updates/changes needed;
- ◆ Keep a *written list* of all prescribed and OTC meds;
- ◆ Insist that every doctor you see review your complete meds lists, at every visit;
- ◆ Bring your list to the Nurse's office (right across from the church library) for a review. I also have several different types of forms to help organize your personal medical dictionary, and am happy to help you access various electronic medical records.

There's an overwhelming amount of information available online about polypharmacy, but one of the clearest pieces I read comes from Johns Hopkins.  
<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/polypharmacy-in-adults-60-and-older>

**Worth the trip:** A panel discussion about **various types of elder care services – and how to decide which you need** – will be held **2:00-3:00 PM tomorrow (May 7)** in the main floor classroom of the Augusta County Library in Fishersville. Panelists representing Visiting Angels, First Choice Hospice, Within U (life) Coaching, and Care Is There will discuss the services their agencies offer; how to decide what sort of help you need; and how to go about procuring that help. Covenant's own Elissa McDonald will be there, representing Care Is There. This meeting is part of the “Triad” series of talks created last year by the Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce, in a cooperative effort with law enforcement and senior organizations hoping to reduce crimes against the elderly, the Chamber's Shasta Weeks said. The meeting is free and open to the public.



# MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><b>6</b></p> <p><b>COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED</b></p> <p>10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study</p> <p>5:30 PM Congregational Care Team</p> <p>7:00 PM Facilities Team</p> <p>7:15 PM Worship Team</p>	<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>10:00 AM Novels &amp; Needles Book Group</p> <p>6:30 PM Faith Explorers (3rd-6th graders)</p>	<p><b>11</b></p>	
<p><b>12 Mother's Day Presbyterian Coffee Project</b></p> <p>8:30 AM Worship Service</p> <p>9:15 AM Alpha Choir</p> <p>9:30 AM Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream</p> <p>11:45 AM Omega Choir</p> <p>11:45 AM Christian Formation Team</p> <p>4:00 PM Technology Team via Zoom</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>11:30 AM Presbyterian Women's Birthday Celebration</p> <p>5:30 PM Preschool Team</p> <p>7:00 PM Stewardship &amp; Finance Team</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>8:00 AM Executive Team</p> <p>9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline</p>	<p><b>18</b></p>
<p><b>19</b></p> <p>8:30 AM Worship Service</p> <p>9:15 AM Alpha Choir</p> <p>9:30 AM Sunday School</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream</p> <p>11:45 AM Omega Choir</p> <p>11:45 AM CareGivers Group</p> <p>7:00 PM STATED SESSION MEETING</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p><b>COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED</b></p> <p>10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study</p> <p>7:00 PM Personnel Team</p>	<p><b>21</b></p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>9:30 AM Yoga Class in Breezeway</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>10:00 AM Novels &amp; Needles Book Group</p>	<p><b>25</b></p>

# CHRISTIAN FORMATION

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

Our Christian Formation classes will take a break for the summer . . . ending on May 19 and returning on September 8.

Christian Formation Links are at the Covenant website:

[www.covenantpresstaunton.org/christian-formation/](http://www.covenantpresstaunton.org/christian-formation/)

## A SPECIAL NOTE FROM RACHEL—

As we complete this academic year, the Christian formation team is already working hard to prepare for the return of Sunday school in the fall. We are working on building teams to help our children and youth grow in the faith and would love to have you be a part of this work. It takes a village to raise our kids and the more hands we have, the easier the task and the more the kids know they are loved and valued here.

Our classes are growing in size! In order for our classes to run smoothly, and for our teachers to be given periods of rest along the way, we need twelve adults to work with our elementary school students and six adults to work with our middle school and high school youth. So we are looking for a bunch of new shepherds to join our teams! We are blessed with dedicated teachers who have done the work of Christian formation for many years. They are eager to welcome new people into this holy work. The lessons are prepared and the supplies are available. What we need are people who want to share the stories and the faith with a new generation.

The best thing about a church community is that it is the extended family that so many families lack these days. Grandparents, aunts, and uncles abound . . . all stepping in to raise the kids together and, sometimes, simply give the parents a moment to rest. If you would like to be part of the team, every Sunday or just once in a while, let me know and we will get you connected!

## Adult Christian Formation

**Sunday School** | 9:30AM | Fellowship Hall | Sundays

The adults are engaged in a six-week study of the parables of Jesus.

**Monday Morning Bible Study** | 10:30AM | Room 6 and on Zoom | Mondays

(more information on page 2)

**Wired Word** | Online Resource (see link above)

## Children's Christian Formation

**Sunday School** | Age 3-Grade 1, Grades 2-5 | 9:30AM | Preschool Wing | Sundays

The children gather for stories, crafts, and activities in the preschool wing. They are learning about doing justice as a spiritual practice.

**Covenant Kids** | Age 3 - Grade 1 | 10:45AM | Covenant Kids Classroom | Sundays

Our youngest disciples are invited to go to Covenant Kids following the children's message to learn about the day's Bible story in an active way during the service.

**Faith Explorers** | Grades 3-6 | 6:30-8:00PM | Great Hall | May 10

Join us once a month for fellowship and games.

## Youth Christian Formation

**Sunday School** | Grades 6-12 | 9:30AM | Youth Room | Sundays

The youth gather for discussion and games. They are working on a unit on the call to Do Justice.

**Confirmation Class** | Grades 8-9 | 11:45AM | Youth Room | Sundays

Celebrate with us on May 19 as our confirmands profess their faith and join the church!

## 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 **2942 pounds (24 since the last newsletter)** of plastic out of the landfills. **AND** we've provided benches to the Boys and Girls Club. 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.





**Come! Celebrate!  
Birthday Offering  
Luncheon, May 14  
at 11:30 AM in the  
Great Hall!**

**PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN**

The **Birthday Offering** awards grants to capital improvement projects that support domestic and international ministries, focusing on areas such as agricultural development, childcare, community organization, criminal justice, drug counseling, economic justice, elderly care, employment training, homelessness, literacy, violence, or women's concerns. If you think this is important work, be prepared to give generously at the May 14th lunch.

Copies of the 2024-2025 Bible Study, **Let Justice Roll Down, God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation** are available. The cost is \$10. Contact Frances Craig (540-414-8170) for a copy or more information.

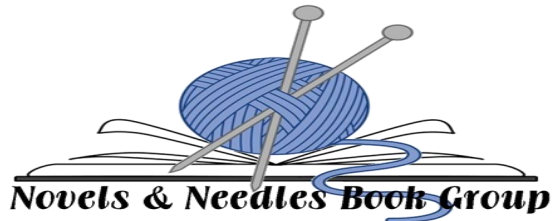


The next  
Equal Exchange  
Sale is **Sunday,  
May 12th.**

Available are:

- ♦ regular coffee for \$9
- ♦ decaf coffee for \$10
- ♦ tea for \$4
- ♦ dark chocolate for \$3

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](mailto:bettyandcliff@comcast.net).



**Novels & Needles Book Group**

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

The book being discussed is ***Louisiana Longshot*** by Jana DeLeon

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, May 19th**

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.



## HELPING HANDS DAY CAMP 2024

is a cooperative ministry of  
Emmanuel Episcopal, Central United Methodist,  
First Presbyterian, Second Presbyterian  
& Covenant Presbyterian.

### HELPING HANDS DAY CAMP

is for children who have completed  
grades K through 5 and  
youth who completed grades 6 to 12  
during the 2023 - 2024 school year.

#### CAMP DATES:

**Monday, July 29** through **Thursday, August 1**  
from **9:00 am to 1:30 pm** and  
**Friday, August 2** from **9:00 am to noon**

#### LOCATION:

Covenant Presbyterian Church

#### COST:

**\$15.00 per camper**

Scholarships are available and contributions to sponsor a  
camper in need of financial assistance are welcome.

Registration forms are available on the church website  
homepage ([covenantpresstaunton.org](http://covenantpresstaunton.org)).

The deadline for registration is **Friday, June 21, 2024**

For more information,  
email [helpinghandsstaunton@gmail.com](mailto:helpinghandsstaunton@gmail.com)

## 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).

COVENANT



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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



**MATTHEW 25**

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



Honoring all those  
who take on the  
role of mothering  
children.

**Happy Mother's Day!**