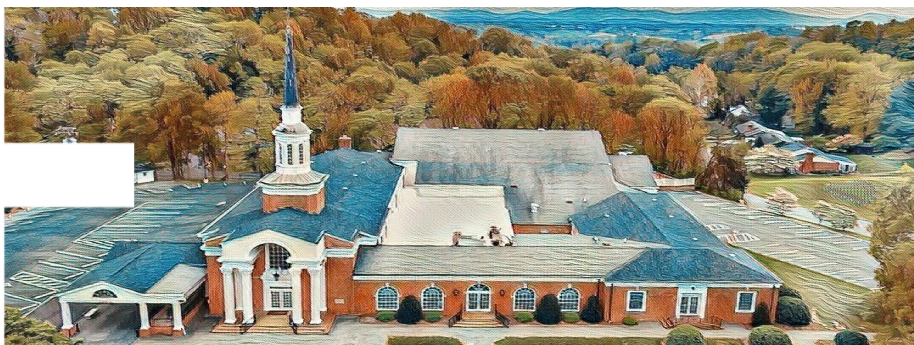


JANUARY 27, 2025  
STAUNTON, VA



# COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## *From the Pastor's Desk*

In a recent article in *Plough Quarterly*, Philip Britts writes: "When the wise men, or the kings, came from the East, they went to Jerusalem, the capital, to inquire, 'Where is he who has been born King of the Jews?' And today those who are 'wise' make the same mistake in looking to worldly power to solve the world's problems." In Mary's Magnificat she speaks of the Lord as One who "has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly." Jesus calls the poor and the humble blessed while warning of woes to the rich and powerful, yet still we look to the rich and powerful as measures of success and to violence and the threat of violence as a valid means to impose our will on other nations and people. We are still looking for the savior among the powerful in Jerusalem instead of among the poor in Bethlehem!

In her sermon at the National Cathedral on Monday, January 21st (which I highly commend to you), Right Reverend Mariann Edgar Budde, an Episcopal bishop, spoke of the importance of unity for our nation as we look to the future.

(<https://www.youtube.com/live/xwwaEuDeqM8>)

She set out three foundations for such unity: respect/dignity toward others, honesty, and humility. Those values echo the voices of the prophets and Jesus throughout Scripture:

(continued on page 3)

"Though we  
cannot think alike  
may we not  
love alike?"  
— John Wesley

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

*Serving*  
**GOD**  
*Together*



### **GREETERS**

FEB 2 -

8:30 AM....Jeanne & Mick Lambert

10:30 AM....Janet Surratt, Jane Wimmer

FEB 9 -

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

10:30 AM....Melissa Druft, Janet Surratt,  
Sally & Jonathan Griffith

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

FEB 2 – **volunteer needed**

FEB 9 – Kara Miller

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

FEB 2 – **volunteer needed**

FEB 9 – **volunteer needed**

### **FLOWER COORDINATORS**

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

### **CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING**

February — Paul Sorrell

*With Sympathy*

Please keep in your prayers  
Nancy Headifen and her family on the  
death of Nancy's husband, Richard,  
on January 13th while in hospice care at  
their home. May God grant him eternal  
rest and grant comfort and peace to  
Nancy and her family.

Please keep in your prayers Jessie and  
Earl Reeves, Martha Ware, Ashley Kane,  
and their family on the January 14th  
death of George Ware, Jessie's brother,  
Martha's brother-in-law, and Ashley's uncle.  
May God grant him eternal rest and grant  
to all his family comfort and peace.



## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Our Children and Youth Protection Policy requires that we have two adults (present whenever we are working with kids. This helps keep our kids and our volunteers safe. We have a fantastic team of Christian Formation program leaders that work hard to prepare for our kids, but we simply cannot provide these programs without help. Volunteers are needed for Sunday School, Covenant Kids, Nursery, and Youth Group.

**SIGN UP HERE:**

<https://bit.ly/3Z80CXM>



## **TO OUR VISITORS**

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

## **Ushers/Greeters Needed**



**Help is always needed!**

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

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

- ♦ **respect** for others, for we ALL are created in the image of God
- ♦ **honesty** in our words and relationships rooted in God's command "You shall not bear false witness" and the Golden Rule
- ♦ **humility**, as proclaimed by the prophet Micah (*What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love kindness/mercy, and walk humbly with your God!*) and by Jesus (*Those who exalt themselves will be humbled and those who humble themselves will be exalted*).

Rev. Budde's encouragement to the president to show mercy draws on the beatitude (*Blessed are the merciful*) and the biblical imperative to be merciful toward others because God has shown mercy to us. Her message was well grounded in Scripture and faithful to Christ's call to us as disciples. Those Christians who take issue with her words would do well to read their Bibles, for they may find that their argument is less with her than with the prophets and Jesus who express God's will for our lives and life together. Within some corners of the evangelical community this reality has resulted in some pastors being castigated for reading portions of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount – not for interpreting those passages, but simply for reading Jesus' words which they describe as "woke" and "weak" and "unrealistic", but which we who claim to be Jesus' disciples call "faithful."

Jesus calls us to be countercultural – to love when the world says, "Hate!"; to forgive when the world says, "Get even!"; to strive to be rich in soul rather than rich in things; to be humble when the world says, "Look at me!" It wasn't easy in the 1st century, and it is no easier today. It is what some have called radical grace and radical love. In that light, may we all be so radical – and thus be faithful!



Want to learn how to be a better visitor? Whether you want to visit other members of our church family or your neighbor down the street, we can all use tips on how to be effective visitors. Come join us, Monday, February 3rd at 4:00 PM in the Breezeway to learn ways to be better visitors and find out more about Covenant's visitation ministry. You don't have to commit to being part of our visitation team to come to the training. If you can't come to the training, but want to be part of our team, please let Becky Earhart know at 540-448-2712.

Items for the next newsletter are due by **9:00 AM on Friday, February 7th.**

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







The next [Equal Exchange](#) Sale is **Sunday, February 2nd.**

Available are:

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

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 contacting 540-290-1089 or

[bettyandcliff@comcast.net](mailto:bettyandcliff@comcast.net).



This is a picture of some of the beautiful books generously donated for the Community Child Care Center. Because of the congregation's generosity each child will have a book to take home.



## ONGOING OUTREACH

### Peanut Butter Sunday

First Sunday of Each Month

You can drop off your jar of peanut butter in the vestibule area 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 BUCKETS** located in the vestibule just outside the church office or in the Narthex.



1000 lbs. = a bench

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH PLASTIC BAGS

**THANK YOU, COVENANT!** We have kept over **3339 pounds** of plastic out of the landfills. **AND** we've provided benches to the Boys and Girls Club and Covenant Preschool. **We are now working towards a sixth bench!** 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)



## RESTOCK THE SHELBURNE PANTRY

**THE PANTRY HAS A CONTINUING  
NEED TO BE STOCKED!**

Donations needed are laundry and cleaning items, hygiene products, and foods such as canned vegetables, canned fruits, soups, and snacks. Please place your donations in the boxes outside the church office or in the Narthex.

*Thank you for helping our community's children and their families!*

What does your January look like? Here at Decapolis, we are already in full swing—collecting manure and green and brown organic material for compost piles, building compost piles, and setting up our training calendar for 2025.

Last year, with your support, we and over 1,000 farmers in more than 50 communities produced 45 tons of organic fertilizer, helping families to have healthier, more productive crops with little to no input cost. Our goal this year is to reach 10,000 small-scale Nigerian farmers with training in regenerative agriculture and wise money management, while sharing with them the redemptive message of the Gospel. We are excited to see all of the requests coming in and for the many opportunities to partner with other ministries and various communities across the country. However, such partnerships do bring their own challenges. In Nigeria, the broken, Western-aided system has contributed to the cycle of poverty, hunger, and dependency. What we are offering is sustainability, which is a threat to dependency. That means that the very help and empowerment we are offering can be seen as a threat.

We are grateful for the guidance and support of Equipping Farmers International, and we ask for prayers for wisdom and discernment, as well as strength for the year ahead. "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He shall establish your plans." ~ Proverbs 16:3

Help us reach our goal by becoming a monthly supporter or by sponsoring training for one or more farmers. \$15 can help a Nigerian family break the cycle of poverty and dependence and say good-bye to hunger forever! Send your gifts through your preferred platform below, and help us spread the redemptive message of the Gospel through regenerative agriculture:

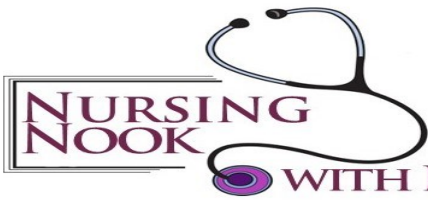
checks: Commission to Every Nation  
PO Box 291307  
Kerrville, TX • 78029-1307  
online: [www.cten.org/crystalraphael](http://www.cten.org/crystalraphael)

**Editor's Note:** Covenant supports Decapolis through our Outreach budget and Glorious Gifts.



Helpful links to follow Decapolis  
Community Development Center:  
[FACEBOOK](#)  
[WEBSITE](#)  
[YOUTUBE](#)





WITH KATHY HENDERSON, RN

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

### **Valentine's Day – favorite holiday for those of us with a sweet tooth – is almost here.**

Conversation hearts, red and pink-frosted baked goodies. Boxes of chocolates. Oh yum. Oh dear. **Those sweets probably contain Red Dye #3**, recently banned as a carcinogen that can exacerbate hyperactivity/attention deficits in sensitive children. On Jan.15, the FDA revoked “the authorized uses in food and ingested drugs of FD&C Red No. 3.” Manufacturers must remove it from food by Jan. 2027, and medicines by Jan. 2028.



Red Dye #3 (erythrosine) is a petroleum-based additive used to give foods and medicines their bright red color. In 1990, the FDA banned its use in cosmetics, citing studies showing it caused cancer in rats. In 1992, *the agency declared its intention to ban Red #3 from food, but ....”decided not to take action.”* In 1994, the European Union banned #3, except in candied cherries. (Japan, China, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand have also banned Red #3.) *Almost twenty years later, in 2012, the Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry concluded that as many as eight percent of all children (are) affected by food colorings.” It was another two decades before consumer groups and scientists were able to pressure the FDA into action. (Meanwhile, California passed its own laws prohibiting the use of #3 in foods made or sold there.)*




“(Although) the FDA has been aware for years that petroleum-based artificial colorant has been shown to cause cancer in animals... (and) linked (it) to hyperactivity and other neurobehavioral effects in children ....” *food and drug industries used more than 200,000 pounds of Red 3 in 2021*, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) noted. The FDA itself estimates that U.S. children between the ages of 2 and 5 consume twice as much Red Dye #3 as the American public, by body weight.

Meanwhile, *Red Dye #3 remains an additive in more than 2,000 of our foods and medicines*, including breakfast cereals, sprinkles, candies, icings, sodas, ice cream and frozen yogurt treats, various fruit and veggie juices, cookies, vegan meats, sausage, bacon and other processed meats. Medicines containing Red Dye #3 include: Gummy vitamins, Omeprazole, Gabapentin, Phentermine, cough syrups and some forms of acetaminophen.

In an effort to phase out #3, some manufacturers use natural extracts derived from fruits, vegetables and seeds. More common, though, is to substitute Red Dye #40 (Allura Red). Despite studies showing it can cause DNA disruptions, hyperactivity and allergic reactions, #40 is currently included in more than 36,000 products -- including Vyvanse, often prescribed to treat ADHD. Recent research also suggests that Yellow #5 (tartrazine) may cause hyperactivity and neurotoxicity in children.

**What's a consumer to do?** Aldi's has eliminated all artificial dyes from its brand. The Good Housekeeping Institute has published a comprehensive list of products including #3 and #40, but honestly? **Your best bet is to read labels.**

# JANUARY FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>27</b> <b>COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED</b> 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	<b>28</b> 7:00 PM Stewardship & Finance Team	<b>29</b> 9:30 AM Yoga Class 5:30 PM Endowment Committee	<b>30</b> 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>31</b>	<b>FEB. 1</b>	
<b>2</b> Peanut Butter Sunday Presbyterian Coffee Project 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream	<b>3</b> 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 4:00 PM Visitation Training 5:30 PM Congregational Care Team 7:00 PM Facilities Team 7:15 PM Worship Team	<b>4</b> 9:30 AM Yoga Class	<b>5</b> 4:00 PM Outreach Team 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>6</b> 9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline 6:30 PM Faith Explorers (Grades 2-5)	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:30 AM Chili Cook-Off/Dessert Bake-Off 4:00 PM Technology Committee via Zoom	<b>10</b> <b>COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED</b> 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 7:00 PM Personnel Team	<b>11</b> 9:30 AM PW Coordinating Team 10:30 AM Presbyterian Women 5:30 PM Preschool Team 7:00 PM Stewardship & Finance Team	<b>12</b> 9:30 AM Yoga Class	<b>13</b> 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>14</b> <b>Valentine's Day</b> <b>God is LOVE.</b>  10:00 AM Novels & Needles Book Group	<b>15</b>





**NEXT MEETING:**  
**Tuesday,**  
**February 11th,**  
**10:30 AM in the**  
**Breezeway**

Please add these dates to your calendar and plan to participate. You know there is no FUN without U!  
**February 11:** PW Fellowship gathers at 10:30 AM in the breezeway. Lesson 5 about air quality is facilitated by Mary Ann Stripling.

**February 23:** Blanket Sunday, a CWS benevolence that the Covenant family generously supports.

**March 11:** PW Fellowship meets at 10:30 AM in the breezeway. Lesson 6 about climate change is led by June Shipplett.

**April 8:** PW Fellowship gathers at 10:30 AM in the breezeway. Lessons 7 and 9 about economic climate and sustaining Creation's health are combined and facilitated by Frances Craig.

**May 13:** PW Fellowship begins at 10:30 AM in the breezeway. Lesson 8 is about intergenerational justice and is led by Jerry Lynn Shipplett.

**June 10:** Lunch at June Shipplett's home.

IN HAPPY MOMENTS, PRAISE GOD!  
IN DIFFICULT MOMENTS, SEEK GOD!  
IN QUIET MOMENTS, WORSHIP GOD!  
IN PAINFUL MOMENTS, TRUST GOD!  
IN EVERY MOMENT, THANK GOD!



Novels & Needles Book Club will meet at 10:00 AM on Friday, February 14th in the Breezeway with Sue Crave Rosen, discussion leader.

The book being discussed is  
***The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell:***  
***A Novel***

by Robert Dugoni

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!



## Monday Morning Bible Study

### Join us 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 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.

# FAMILY EVENT

ANNUAL

# CHILI COOK-OFF & DESSERT BAKE-OFF

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

FEBRUARY

9<sup>TH</sup>

Begins at

11:30 AM

#1  
Best  
Award

Sign-up for the competition or  
register your attendance at:

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



## 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*

**Mitzi White**

*Developmental Preschool Director*

**Martha Pierce**

*Administrative Assistant*

**Debby Bibens**

*Financial Secretary*

**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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**MATTHEW 25**

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



***The weather outside is frightful!  
Are church services or events canceled?  
Want to know the answer?***

Information is available via an opt-in email, through the Covenant Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/Covenant-Presbyterian-Church-163891301309](http://www.facebook.com/Covenant-Presbyterian-Church-163891301309)), on the home page of the church website ([covenantpresstaunton.org](http://covenantpresstaunton.org)), and on WHSV-TV.

If you are not on the opt-in email list and would like to be, please contact Martha in the church office at 540-885-2138.



**"All right, Ms Henley, we'll turn up the heat."**