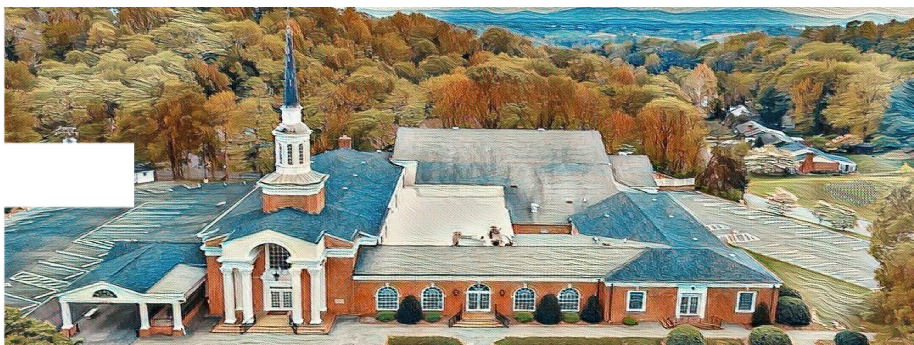


MARCH 10, 2025
STAUNTON, VA



COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

From the Pastor's Desk

When I was growing up in Slippery Rock, PA in the 1960s and 1970s Lent was celebrated pretty much only by the Catholic Church in town. We Presbyterians knew it was Lent because the schools served fish sticks every Friday through those weeks, but in our church, we did little in the way of observance. We did have an Ash Wednesday service (without imposition of ashes) and a Maundy Thursday service, but otherwise Lent was barely noticed. Over the years, how-ever, Presbyterians have rediscovered what our Catholic friends knew all along – that Lent is worthy of observance for it makes us conscious of our need for repentance and renewal and prepares us for the celebration of the Resurrection at Easter.

Here we began our observance of Lent with the imposition of ashes last Wednesday; we countdown the weeks to Easter with Lenten devotionals to focus our attention and prayers, Taizé worship each Wednesday evening, a simple meal of soup and bread at Together on Wednesday dinners (without desserts!), and perhaps by practicing a Lenten discipline (giving up something for these weeks, fasting, committing to pray or read Scripture, or engaging in some form of service). The purpose is not to prove publicly how holy we are, but to acknowledge privately how holy we are NOT! It is to take time to assess our faith and faithfulness in an intentional way and to recommit to do better – not in the world's eyes, but in God's eyes!

(continued on page 3)

Stand firm
in the faith:
be courageous;
be strong.

1 Corinthians 16:13



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VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG

Serving
GOD
Together



GREETERS

MAR 16 -

8:30 AM....France Craig

10:30 AM....Sally Griffith, Janet Surratt

MAR 23 -

8:30 AM....France Craig

10:30 AM....Sue Morley

NURSERY (10:30 AM)

MAR 16 - **Volunteer Needed**

MAR 23 - Kara Miller

COVENANT KIDS (10:30 AM)

MAR 16 - **Volunteer Needed**

MAR 23 - **Volunteer Needed**

FLOWER COORDINATORS

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING

MARCH — Craig Whitacre

THANKS
from the
HEART

Thank you so much for all the cards, caring phone calls, prayers, and visits at the loss of my husband. I am grateful for all your love and support and am truly blessed to be part of this wonderful congregation.

— Nancy Headifen

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>



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED in Sunday School, Covenant Kids, & Nursery

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.

SIGN UP HERE:

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



JOIN THE OFFICE VOLUNTEER TEAM

Are you looking for a way to contribute to the work of Covenant? We're seeking individuals to join our team of office volunteers. Help us with tasks like answering phones, greeting visitors, and more, based on your skills. Volunteers substitute when the church administrative assistant needs to be away from the office for vacation, appointments, or illness. For more information or to volunteer, contact Martha at the church office (540-885-2138).

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK (cont'd)

There are a host of other things going on that threaten to distract us from any Lenten observance – the arrival of spring, March Madness, senioritis, spring breaks, breaking news about what is newly broken in our nation or world – and it can be tempting to lose sight of the journey toward the cross these forty days. The same distractions tempt us to take for granted the agony of the cross and the good news of the empty tomb. Why pay attention to something that happened so long ago when there is so much happening now! The answer of course is that what happened long ago very much impacts our lives today and our hope for tomorrow. "If you would be my disciple, then deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow me," says Jesus. If we are to be his disciples, then we need to recall something of what that cross meant for him and what its implication are for us and our discipleship. We need to travel that road with him to the cross and then to the empty tomb. For it is there that hope is born for us in life beyond death; it is there that we find strength to persevere in the present.

So, take time in these coming weeks to observe a holy Lent, not because you have to, but because in so doing, you may grow closer to God and to being the person God calls you to be – a faithful disciple of the crucified and risen Lord!



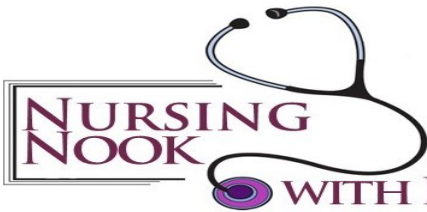
Items for the next newsletter are due by **9:00 AM on Friday, March 21st.**

Please email Martha at: covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com



ICM Industrial & Commercial Ministries is offering an Introductory Chaplain Training Seminar on Thursday, May 1 and Friday, May 2 at the Plecker Workforce Training Center at Blue Ridge Community College from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM each day. This is a local mission ministry that reaches out to people where they work; many are "unchurched" or searching for answers to problems in their lives. Chaplains provide a caring presence, listening ear, and effective referral for working people who may need help with many kinds of issues – marriage and family, substance abuse, credit/financial problems, grief and loss, illness and stress. Please contact Woody Sanders, Executive Director of ICM, at 540-432-1919 or www.ICMAmerica.org for more information.





WITH KATHY HENDERSON, RN

Kathy Henderson, RN • (540) 290-6396

covenantnurse@gmail.com

Contact Kathy with medical questions or for a blood pressure check.

TOW Talks return this Wednesday. On the roster: Insightful, provocative – occasionally amusing – discussions about gender, money and emotional and mental health. Come for the talks; stay for the camaraderie, the soup and truly amazing salads served at our Lenten suppers.

March 12: Associate Pastor Rae Watson begins the series with **LGBT-What?**, a frank exploration of the alphabet soup we wish we understood, and its impact on our lives.

March 19: Seth Ward and Tammy Scott of United Bank will address the growing problem of **Fraud and Financial Elder Abuse**. Many of us know Seth as an Elder, musician and chair of the Fellowship Committee, but he's also worked for United Bank for more than 10 years, currently as a personal banker in their Harrisonburg Main office. He will bring United Bank branch manager (Harrisonburg) Tammy Scott with him.

Between them they've witnessed, resolved and prevented scores of scams and frauds. We're a savvy group at Covenant, but – according to a Bankrate survey taken earlier this month – we (and most of America) are subject to fraud and scams. Before coming to this talk, check out the following link for some eye-popping statistics about exactly who is being targeted and scammed. (Here's a hint: *more than a third of all U.S. adults have experienced financial fraud or a scam in the past 12 months.*)

<https://www.bankrate.com/credit-cards/news/financial-fraud-survey/>

March 26: Seth and Ms. Scott return to discuss **Financial Literacy**. This talk is geared to older adults, with topics ranging from how money is insured and how much money to keep in accounts, to basic smart money management.

April 2: Rae returns with **Where's the Manual? Emotional Health in Our Children**. Just what is "gentle parenting" and have I destroyed my child's ego by yelling? What if I miss a night of bedtime stories or can't make it to the school play? Parent (and grandparent)-hood is fraught with doubts. As a veteran teacher-turned-pastor who focuses much energy on our Youth programs, Rae is familiar with children's abilities (or problems with) expressing emotions, coping with feelings and forming nurturing relationships. We'll explore new ways to build relationships and nurture emotional health in our children.

April 9: Rae will offer the sequel to **Emotional Health**, with **Where's the Manual? Youth Mental Health**. Today's teens are under enormous pressures undreamed of even a generation ago: Anxiety, depression and other mental health issues are rising. Led by Rae, we'll discuss ways our families and churches can help protect emotional health, build healthy coping skills and care for the mental health of our youth during this critical life stage.





Matthew 25 opportunity to help feed people at the Waynesboro Area Refuge Ministry (WARM). WARM is a Christian community showing Christ's love through shelter and support for the homeless. The WARM shelter offers a place to stay and eat from November through March. Different churches host and need help from other churches and organizations to provide meals. Covenant will provide meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) on March 27, 29, and 30 at Tinkling Springs Presbyterian Church. Please sign up below to help as a Covenant volunteer to prepare and serve a breakfast or dinner meal, or to provide some of the breakfast or lunch foods. Foods should be delivered to the labeled box or refrigerator in the upstairs kitchen by Sunday, March 23. Sign up at:

bit.ly/41CITjp



VALLEY MISSION PAPER and CLEANING SUPPLIES COLLECTION

Help Valley Mission with their work of sheltering people in our community who are getting their lives settled, Covenant has the opportunity to shower them with **CLEANING SUPPLIES** like dish detergent, spray cleaners, Comet, bathroom cleaners, and **PAPER PRODUCTS** like paper towels, toilet paper, napkins, etc.

Please bring contributions of your favorite cleaning supplies and/or paper products to the church by Sunday, March 30. There are containers marked "VALLEY MISSION PAPER PRODUCTS and CLEANING SUPPLIES" in the vestibule by the church office and in the narthex by the Sanctuary.



valley+mission
shelter support hope



HOST, HELPERS & SOUP NEEDED

March 5 through April 9 - TOW will be serving soups during the Lenten season. We need five (5) crockpots of soup with one being a vegetarian option each Wednesday. TOW begins at 6:00 pm so please have your soup in the Great Hall 15 minutes prior. Hosts are responsible for bringing salad and bread and helping with set up and clean up. Hosts will be notified about how many people rsvp'd and will be reimbursed by the TOW fund.

Sign up at: <https://bit.ly/4hgM28f> or call the church office (540-885-2138).



**Wednesdays at 6:00 pm
in the Great Hall**

**March 5 - April 9
Menu is 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/4jBxYYQ>

OR sign the Friendship Pad on Sunday
OR contact the church office
at 540-885-2138.



**At 7:00 pm after TOW beginning on March 5, join us
for Lenten Taizé Worship Services in the Sanctuary.**

Calling all cooks!

If you enjoy cooking we need you to be part of Covenant's meal ministry. This ministry provides occasional meals for those recuperating from illness or welcoming a new baby. If you are not already signed up and want to be added to the list, contact Karen Peterson (petersonkarenc@gmail.com) or the church office.

MEAL MINISTRY



February 2025

Early last year, we shared that we and Equipping Farmers International (EFI) were partnering with Ika Christian Mission to upgrade some dorm buildings that they have generously agreed to let us use for accommodation for our training programs, in between the Christian camps that they host, until we are able to build dorm buildings on our project site.

(Click here to see the before! <https://bit.ly/dormsbefore>)



We are excited to announce that not only is the upgrade completed, but we were able to use the dorms for a training for the first time this month! From February 10-13, we held two 2-day regenerative agriculture trainings for 60 students and staff, hosted by Ika Bible School, at the site.

This training also helps us realize another one of our goals—to start introducing this training to Bible school students across Nigeria and to eventually have it become part of their curriculum. (Also in attendance was the provost of another Bible school who hopes to bring the training to his school soon, too!) EFI specifically focuses on cultivating agricultural discipleship for enhanced food security and livelihoods, envisioning a network of churches eradicating hunger and insecurity globally. (Learn more at efi-intl.org.) Equipping pastors-in-training with this knowledge helps to fulfill this vision. It's just another way of using regenerative agriculture to help share the Gospel!

“...to equip the saints for the work of ministry.” ~ Ephesians 4:12a

You can help us train more national pastors and missionaries in regenerative farming by becoming a monthly supporter. Send your gifts through your preferred platform below, and help us spread the redemptive message of the Gospel through regenerative agriculture.

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

checks: Commission to Every Nation
PO Box 291307
Kerrville, TX • 78029-1307


online: www.cten.org/crystalraphael

Helpful links to follow Decapolis
Community Development Center:

[FACEBOOK](#)
[WEBSITE](#)
[YOUTUBE](#)



MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	10 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 7:00 PM Personnel Team	11 9:30 AM PW Coordinating Team 10:30 AM Presbyterian Women 5:00 PM Preschool Team 7:00 PM Stewardship & Finance Team	12 9:30 AM Yoga Class 5:00 PM Endowment Com- mittee 5:00 PM TOW Talks 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Taizé Service	13 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	14 9:00 AM Executive Team 10:00 AM Novels & Needles Book Group 6:30 PM Middle School Manna	15
	16 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:45 AM CareGivers Group 11:45 AM High School Youth 7:00 PM STATED SESSION MEETING	17 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	18	19 9:30 AM Yoga Class 5:00 PM TOW Talks 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Taizé Service	20 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	21 9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline
23 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:45 AM Fellowship Team 11:45 AM Grief Support Group	24 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	25	26 9:30 AM Yoga Class 5:00 PM TOW Talks 6:00 PM Together on Wednesday (TOW) 7:00 PM Taizé Service	27 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	28	29



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

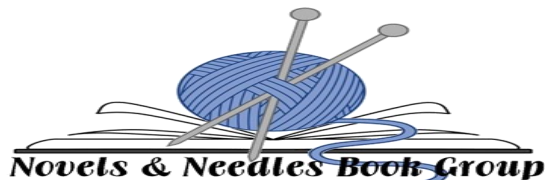
**NEXT MEETING:
Tuesday,
March 11th,
10:30 AM in the
Breezeway**

Come join the women of the church on March 11 at 10:30 in the Breezeway. Good friends! Good conversation! Good fellowship!

The Church World Service Blanket Campaign is an annual event at Covenant Church and **there's still time to donate.**

Make checks payable to Covenant Presbyterian Church and write 'Blanket Sunday' in the memo line.

Cash donations are also accepted. Please be generous for the need is great and every gift – large or small – makes a difference.



Novels & Needles Book Group

Novels & Needles Book Club will meet at 10:00 AM on Friday, March 14th in the Breezeway with Peggy Roberson, discussion leader.

The book being discussed is ***Clear: A Novel*** by Carys Davies

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!



CareGivers will meet immediately after the 10:30 service on **Sunday, March 16th** 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, March 23
at 11:45AM in Room 5.**

As Spring approaches, 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!

We meet on the 4th Sunday of each month immediately after the 10:30 service.

Please contact Eileen Cooper if you would like more information.

DID YOU KNOW



13 local nonprofits have been seriously impacted by the United Way closing. Come learn about their important work, their volunteer/resource needs, and how you can help!

- ARROW Project
- Blue Ridge CASA
- Blue Ridge Legal Services
- Boys & Girls Club
- Community Child Care
- New Directions Center
- On the Road Collaborative



- Renewing Homes of Greater Augusta
- Valley Children's Advocacy Center
- Valley Hope Counseling Center
- Valley Program for Aging Services
- Valley Supportive Housing
- Waynesboro Family YMCA

SATURDAY, MARCH 29TH, 10:00-12:00

(REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED)

McCracken Hall

Trinity Episcopal Church

214 W. Beverley Street

A small, but growing number of people have come together to see how we can help a number of our local organizations that have been affected financially by

the closure of our United Way.

We invite you to Trinity Episcopal Church on March 29th to hear directly from these organizations and to learn what we as a community can do to help.

For more information, contact Sibley "Cookie" McClure.

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.

COVENANT



Presbyterian
Church of America

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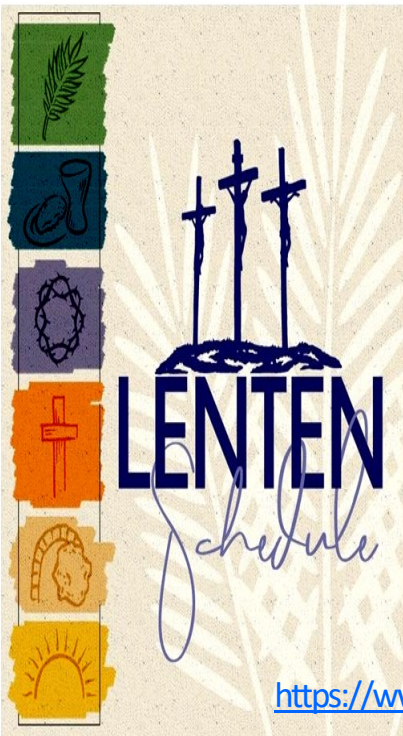
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



MATTHEW 25

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



Lenten Taizé Service in the Sanctuary (no live stream)
Each Wednesday March 12 through April 9 at 7:00 PM

Palm Sunday Services in the Sanctuary:
Sunday, April 13 at 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM (live streamed)

Maundy Thursday Service in the Sanctuary
Thursday, April 17 at 7:00 PM (live streamed)

Easter Services in Sanctuary:
Sunday, April 20 at 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM (live streamed)

Live streams can be viewed at

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_2d6A2fCHNPM03MmXFFY5w/live