

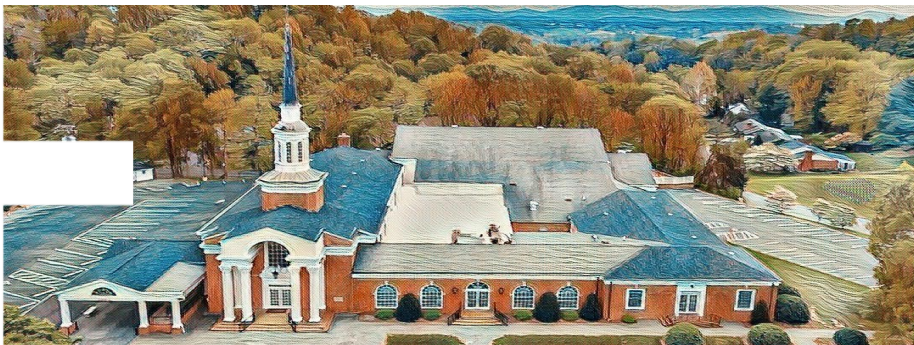


MAY 5, 2025
STAUNTON, VA



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COVENANT CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION OF COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

From the Pastor's Desk

The cover story in the April edition of *The Christian Century* poses an interesting question: **What – in seven words – is the Bible for?** Fifty writers – some biblical scholars or theologians, others writers or pastors – offer their suggested answers with some brief commentary to explain their choices. Among the responses:

"Window into God, mirror to the soul"

"A declaration of dependence"

"Awakening us to God's insistent call"

"Asking questions but not always giving answers"

"A library of human encounters with divinity"

"Showing us our foolishness and God's wisdom"

"Connecting God's people across millennia through story"

"To be a prism refracting God's light"

"Gathering around stories of encounter with God"

"Revealing the character and purpose of God"

"Proclaiming God's work as people understand it"

"Expressing God's longing for relationship with creation"

"Encountering God's grace"

The responses are thought-provoking and reflect the limitations of a seven-word answer, but they also offer a variety of perspectives on the question posed. As you may have noted, the question is not *What is the Bible?* but *What is the Bible for?* In other words, what is the purpose of the Bible? There are some assumptions about what the Bible **is** in that question, though that too may be somewhat ambiguous, and the answers reflect various understandings and emphases in that regard.

(continued on page 3)

VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.COVENANTPRESSTAUNTON.ORG

Serving
GOD
Together



GREETERS

MAY 11 -

8:30 AM....Cheryl & Rick Fauerbach

10:30 AM....Melissa Druff, Janet Surratt

MAY 18 -

8:30 AM....Gary & Nancy Gourley

10:30 AM....Janet Surratt, Linda Tenney

NURSERY (10:30 AM)

(sign up below to volunteer)

MAY 11 - **Volunteer Needed**

MAY 18 - **Volunteer Needed**

COVENANT KIDS (10:30 AM)

(sign up below to volunteer)

MAY 11 - **Volunteer Needed**

MAY 18 - **Volunteer Needed**

FLOWER COORDINATORS

Susan Polly and Christy Davis

CHURCH OPENING and CLOSING

MAY — Bill Terry



SERVICES OF *Remembrance*

May 9 @ 2:00 PM - Memorial Service
for Pat Dindinger

May 30 @ 2:00 PM - Memorial Service
for Betty Bonham



Sanctuary *flowers* **SIGN-UP**

Provide flowers in memory or in honor of someone, or just to decorate the sanctuary. Directions are given on the sign-up form. Questions? Contact Susan Polly or Christy Davis. Please sign up at <https://bit.ly/3MD9wXO> least two weeks before your desired date.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



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.

SIGN UP HERE:

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



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

In my own attempts to answer the question, I found that most of my answers ended up with eight words that were not easily reducible to seven. After several aborted attempts, I arrived at the following potential responses:

*Telling God's story in human words
Revealing God's love and purpose
for creation
Inspiring faith and faithfulness among
God's children
Finding and guiding the lost and
unforsaken*

None of these responses is wholly adequate either, but in different respects, each seems to me to answer the question in a faithful way.

How might you answer that question? What is the Bible for – to you – in seven words or less? I invite you to reflect on that question and to send me your thoughts to be shared (unattributed) in another article in this space later in the summer. There are no right or wrong answers, only our best attempts to describe what place the Bible has in our lives and in the lives of God's people.



Welcome, New Member



Hayley Tenney, niece of Covenant member Linda Tenney, was baptized and joined Covenant on Sunday, April 27 at the 10:30 worship service. Hayley is a recent graduate of Virginia Tech with a degree in biomedical engineering. She has recently accepted a job at Merck Engineering. Hayley enjoys bicycling, reading, cooking, and volunteering.

Items for the next newsletter are due by **9:00 AM on Friday, May 16th.**

Please email Martha at: covenantpcusastaunton@gmail.com



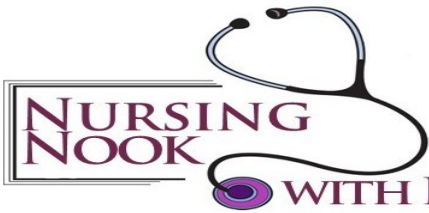


COVENANT'S ENDOWMENT FUND

Covenant established a Memorial Fund and an Endowment Fund in 1999. **The Endowment Fund** supports the long-range mission and ministry of the church. Its balance as of March 31, 2025 was \$285,000. It is managed under Session-established guidelines. Every year a sum is transferred to the General Fund to help support the current work of the church. The amount is 4% of the fund value, based on a 3-year rolling average. In January 2025 this amount was \$9,901.

It helps support ongoing projects of the church. The Endowment's principal remains untouched for future growth. There are three primary sources of income to the Endowment Fund: direct gifts from members, bequests from estates that are otherwise not directed to a specific project, and 50% of any memorial donations not directed to specific projects or programs. **The Memorial Fund** helps support specific projects. It is funded by direct contributions to the Memorial Fund or 50% of undesignated memorial gifts. Recently, Memorial funds were used for new shelving for the music room and upgrades to the Memorial Garden. You can contribute to any fund at Covenant with a check made payable to Covenant, and a note directing to what fund that donation should go. Gifts can also be directed through estate planning. If you would like to know more, you can contact any member of the Memorial/Endowment Fund Committee: Stan Grimm, Karen Hanna, Elissa McDonald, Louise Scott, Bob Stripling, and Ty Tysinger





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

WITH KATHY HENDERSON, RN



Spring is here: Time to get outside and get (at least a little) dirty. Yes, flowers in porch pots count, but if you'd like a chance to do a little hands-on farming, we have several opportunities in the immediate area.

Thanks to our Fellowship Team, we now have a special connection to the **Jones Community Gardens and Park**. The Gardens project, begun in 2021 as a single plot in downtown Staunton, was a dream of sisters Naomi and Sarah Jones, who wanted to create food equity in their neighborhood. Since then, the Garden

has expanded exponentially – and has delivered more than 23,000 pounds of fresh produce to city residents. Volunteer opportunities include: planting, watering, weeding and picking; washing and packaging produce; working the market stand; delivering produce. More information is available at: <https://www.jonesgarden.org/#/>

Project Grows, whose educational farm just north of Staunton, broke ground in 2012 with the dream of providing food equity, food education and a local food system development, has since expanded to include a farm stand, mobile markets, a Youth Leadership in Agriculture (YLA) program, summer camps and (salaried) summer jobs for high schoolers. Volunteer opportunities – on the farm, in markets and educational settings – are available for both individuals and groups, with specific tasks determined in meetings between Project Grows managers and applicants. The farm also offers paid job opportunities for high school juniors and seniors, as YLA Crew members of assistant leaders. Applications available on website. For more information:

<https://www.projectgrows.org/>

The Farm at Augusta Health, begun in 2017 as a cooperative venture with the Allegheny Mountain Institute and designed to connect nutritious food with health care, has expanded to include a Food FARMacy, educational programs, food pantries, food box delivery to both AHC employees and community members – and provides produce for the hospital's cafeteria. Volunteers (over the age of 13) are needed for hands-on work – no experience necessary. To participate, just show up at any of the following times: 10:00 AM to noon and/or 4:00 to 6:00 PM on May 14th, May 28th, June 11th or June 25th. For more information, contact Farm manager Hannah Dorrel at HDorrel@augustahealth.com, and/or visit the hospital's website:

<https://www.augustahealth.com/service/community-outreach/community-health-needs-assessment/community-benefit-initiatives/farm/>

If you need plants for your own yard or deck, check out local Farmers' Markets. Project Grows is holding a special plant sale, 4:00 to 6:00 PM this Friday, May 9, at the farm on Berry Road. Another excellent source: Local high schools, whose FFA groups open their greenhouses to the public.

Please remember: 1) Sunscreen, hats, closed-toe shoes and water are important accessories; and 2) Working outdoors is good for heart, mind and soul.

Look at what our first group of trainers has been up to in just the first four weeks after being trained!

- ◆ Two encouraged other trainees who did not implement last year to get started by working alongside them.
- ◆ Seven started doing informal gathers to build compost with friends and neighbors.
- ◆ Six invited us to come and do a fully co-hosted training for their master training certification.
- ◆ Two met with local government and traditional rulers to start sharing the vision with them.
- ◆ Four held their first co-hosted trainings — a 2-day program in Kaduna, and 1-day programs in Kogi and Nasarawa.



Here is an encouraging report of one of our new trainers:

"The most exciting thing for me is the level of joy and energy I felt to do this and see how it's already stirring hope in people, even at this brief level of trainings. One of my first trainees went with the good news and mobilized a team of 9 eager men who waited for us to come and help them build their compost! Someone else said to me, 'Thank you! I now can see to help my brother get food this season. He's always short of food to feed his family even after harvest, which is always scanty.'"

Learn more about the impact on a local chief and his community and see more pictures and videos of our new trainers in action by clicking here:

<https://bit.ly/decapolismastertrainers>

"these are...fellow workers for the kingdom of God..., and they have proved to be an encouragement to me." ~ Colossians 4:11

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](#)
[EMAIL](#)



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.



PLASTIC BAG COLLECTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

THANK YOU, COVENANT! We have kept over **3480 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



SHELBURNE PANTRY RESTOCK

Donations are always needed!

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

Thank you for your continued support of this Outreach Project!



MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 5:30 PM Congregational Care Team 7:00 PM Facilities Team 7:15 PM Worship Team	6 9:30 AM Yoga Class	7 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	8 10:00 AM Novels & Needles Book Group 2:00 PM Memorial Service for Pat Dindinger	9 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:45 AM Christian Formation Team 4:00 PM Technology Team via Zoom	10	11 MOTHER'S DAY 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:45 AM Christian Formation Team 4:00 PM Technology Team via Zoom
12 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study 7:00 PM Personnel Team	13 9:30 AM PW Coordinating Team 10:30 AM Presbyterian Women 5:00 PM Preschool Team 7:00 PM Stewardship & Finance Team	14 9:30 AM Yoga Class	15 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	16 9:00 AM Newsletter Submission Deadline 9:00 AM Executive Team	17	18 8:30 AM Worship Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service and via Live Stream 11:45 AM CareGivers Group Fellowship Team 7:00 PM STATED SESSION MEETING
19 COVENANT CONNECTION PUBLISHED 10:30 AM Monday Morning Bible Study	20 9:30 AM Presbytery Meeting at Woodstock Presbyterian Church	21 9:30 AM Yoga Class	22 5:45 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	23	24	



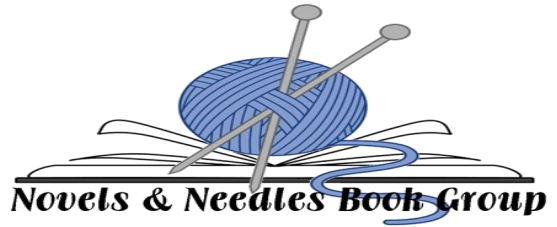
PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

**NEXT MEETING:
Tuesday, May 13th
10:30 AM in the
Breezeway**

Come! Join the celebration of the PW Birthday Offering! The Birthday Offering

is one of Presbyterian Women's two offerings. Received in the spring each year, it gives women a tangible way to celebrate the blessings in their lives. The Birthday Offering funds up to five projects each year, in amounts of \$75,000 to \$150,000 each. The women of Covenant are giving generously to this offering!

All women are invited to join in Bible Study and fellowship on Tuesday, May 13, at 10:30 in the morning. The gathering, facilitated by Jerry Lynn Shipplett, meets in the breezeway. There will be light refreshments!



Novels & Needles Book Club will meet at 10:00 AM on Friday, May 9th in the Breezeway.

The book being discussed is
The Reading List
by Sara Nisha Adams

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, May 18th

in the Middle School Room. 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.



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.



HELPING HANDS DAY CAMP 2025

is a cooperative ministry of
Emmanuel Episcopal, Central United Methodist,
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 2024 - 2025 school year.

CAMP DATES:

Monday, July 28 through **Thursday, July 31**
from **9:00 am to 1:30 pm** and
Friday, August 1 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 at:

[www.covenantpresstaunton.org/
helping-hands-camp-2025/](http://www.covenantpresstaunton.org/helping-hands-camp-2025/)

The deadline for registration is **Friday, June 20, 2025**

For more information,

email 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

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.



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MATTHEW 25

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



Do you enjoy gardening and have time to help an important community project? Jones Gardens has many opportunities for volunteers. This successful project began in 2021 by Naomi and Sarah Jones, and supplies fresh, home grown organic nutritious food to our local community. Since its inception, it has delivered over 23,000 pounds of fresh produce to Staunton households.

Some areas where Covenant attendees can help:

Wednesday and Friday at 9:00 AM -
Wash and package harvested produce for the Food Delivery Program.

Fridays at 3:00 PM & Saturdays at 8:45 AM -
Assist at the market stand selling produce.

Jones Gardens has many other projects where volunteers can help, including a composting exchange program, harvesting, fresh food delivery, and general garden tasks like weeding and watering (between 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM).

Contact Nancy Headifen if you would like more information or want to help this great organization. nheadifen@gmail.com or (540) 487-1777.

More information is on their website:
<http://www.jonesgarden.org/#/>



Join us on Wednesday, May 14th, at 9:00 am. We will meet at the church parking lot to carpool to Jones Gardens to help wash and package produce for Market Day on Friday.