

THE COVENANTER

August 16, 2020

Member NE GEORGIA Presbytery, Synod of the South Atlantic, General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service, Sunday, August 16th :

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCkRp1t3MnecoYXnds4X03A>



**Parents and Friends of Our Covenant Children...
Save the date!**

Rally Day Drive-Thru

Tuesday, September 8, 5- 7 p.m. and Wednesday, September 9, 2 - 3:30 p.m.

Steer your car through our food pantry drive-thru and pick up a bag filled with surprises, Sunday School materials and supplies, and a home-baked treat!

DAILY BIBLE READINGS— Aug. 17—23

- Monday Psalm 8
- Tuesday Zephaniah 3: 16-20
- Wednesday Isaiah 43: 1-7
- Thursday Genesis 12: 1-9
- Friday Deuteronomy 30: 11-20
- Saturday Isaiah 44: 1-5
- Sunday Jeremiah 29: 11-14



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1065 Gaines School Road
Athens, Georgia 30605
706-548-2756 or 706-613-2344
www.covpresathens.org
covenantp@covpresathens.org

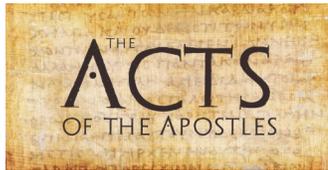
Prayer Concerns: Our Nation, for protesters, police, elected officials and church leaders; John, Mary Sue, & Elizabeth Brewer with health issues; for those who are affected by the COVID-19 illness, as well as their caregivers, our healthcare professionals, government leaders and those who are working around the clock to minimize the impact of this virus; Anna Holshouser recovering well at home; Ginger Davis-Beck undergoing cancer treatments; Anne Page at Avery Place #145; Pauline Marshall at Highland Hills #112 .



During the Covid-19 crisis we are scheduling online opportunities to grow in discipleship. Church school classes for all ages, midweek studies, and youth group programs from Montreat are available online, and the links to these opportunities which require ZOOM invitations may be viewed

weekly on our church website: covpresathens.org. Please make it a habit to check the website often for links to our weekly newsletter and other communications, online giving, and our Sunday morning virtual worship services!

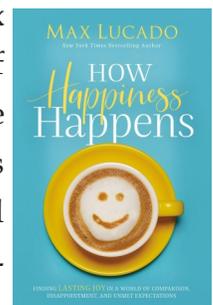
HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP—We will gather on the basketball court, Sunday, August 16, 3-5pm, to reconnect, remember, and celebrate friendships. In this season of pandemic with sheltering in place, we will share ideas about how we will move forward—virtually. Masks and social distancing are required, and you are asked to bring your own snacks and drinks. Be prepared to continue the Montreat tradition of making and sharing friendship gift bags!



EMMAUS ROAD CLASS—Beginning this Sunday the Emmaus Road Class embarks on a seven-week study of the Book of Acts. We will look at Acts not just as a story of the church's growth or the spread of the gospel, but also as a way of discerning how God, the Holy Spirit was at work during the apostles' journeys of faith. As we travel with them on their journeys we may

find instead that "this journey more closely resembles *"A Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy"*. (Acts of the Apostles Commentary, Beverly Gaventa. Our first lesson will cover chapters 1 and 2 and you are invited to read them using whatever version of the Bible you own. Please join our worthy conversation on Sunday mornings at 10am. For a ZOOM invitation please contact Bob Trouteaud email bob@trouteaud.com

The Journey Class will begin a new ZOOM Sunday School class using Max Lucado's book, "How Happiness Happens: Finding Lasting Joy in a World of Comparison, Disappointment, and Unmet Expectations". The book may be purchased from Amazon or your local independent bookstore. Various class members plan to share responsibility for leading discussion by signing up and taking turns. Steve Rathbun will continue as technical host. Check the church website next week for ZOOM instructions!



Discussion of the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Approved Budget

By Pam Knox for the Finance Ministry Team

This is the second part of my discussion of the current state of Covenant's finances. Last week I provided a financial summary of the 2019-2020 fiscal year, which you can find in the August 9 Covenant. This week I present the final approved budget for the July 2020-June 2021 fiscal year. Karen has placed a copy on the church web site for you to look at <http://covpresathens.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/approved-2020-2021-budget.pdf> .

The original proposed budget we sent out during the pledge drive was for \$525,230. It was ambitious but one we thought was possible. After the pledge drive began, the coronavirus drastically changed our lives and our worship at Covenant, moving us to online services and the end of all other in-person activities. Through it all, you gave faithfully to Covenant and our receipts almost exactly matched our pledges. However, the pledges we received for the 2020-2021 fiscal year were only \$450,000, which was slightly less than what we received in pledges in 2019-2020 (\$461,484). I am sure that the uncertainty about jobs, health, and what the church should be doing in these unprecedented times all figured into your individual pledge amounts. As a result, the Finance Ministry Team asked each church ministry team to reassess what their needs were, assuming that there would be no in-person church through September, and each team provided us with an updated budget request. This reduced the total amount to about \$507,000. However, we felt that budget remained too high considering the pledges, especially since our other sources of income from rent and non-pledged giving have also been cut back severely.

The Finance Ministry Team also discussed the large surplus that we had in the 2019-2020 net budget, which I described last week. After consideration, we suggested to Session that some of the line items such as those for Montreat, a digital piano, and the mission trip be funded for 2020-2021 by using the excess income from last fiscal year to create a group of 1-year Special Restricted Accounts (SRAs) to pay for those items. If those accounts are not used (for example, if no mission trip is taken) then those SRAs would be closed and the amounts returned to the general fund. Session agreed and the budget was approved. You can see those SRAs listed at the bottom of the 2020-2021 approved budget with asterisks on the associated lines in the approved budget in the right-hand column.

Highlights of the approved budget include raises of 2 percent for all personnel to offset rising costs of living. We also provided an increase for Asher Hill, who has taken on added responsibilities for videotaping and producing our YouTube services, and an increase for Rindy Trouteaud to compensate her for her current workload. It also includes a position for a part-time neighborhood coordinator. Session members will also note a slight change in the compensation for Kim, our piano accompanist, since we forgot to change her compensation from 10 months last year (she started in September) to 12 months in the current fiscal year. The Community Outreach Ministry Team also recommended a restructuring of our local outreach gifts to better reflect the current neighborhood needs that Covenant is responding to. If you have questions about this section, then you may wish to contact Paige Campbell, the head of that ministry team, for more information. The rest of the changes, which are mostly quite small, came from adjustments by other ministry teams.

Note that because of the uncertainty about when we can return to in-person worship, we plan to reevaluate the budget in January so that it reflects how the church actually operated in the last quarter of 2020 and the current status of the pandemic, which is still unknown. In the meantime, please contact me if you have additional questions about the budget and I will be happy to try to address them.



Cov Presby Landscape Improvements—



Landscaping improvements at Cov Presby have finally reached the stage of visible notice. Following a design prepared by Victory Landscapes of Bogart, GA, a variety of new green and flowering shrubs may now be seen along the sidewalk in front of the Fellowship Hall as well as surrounding the street side of the front patio. Note the photos. Work around the front yard sign is progressing, as newly installed trees enclose it together with additional plantings to come. Alex Clark and Hank Tweedell have installed and tweaked the operational irrigation system that will aid in maintaining this new landscaping. Andrew Zimdars and Ben Bruner have removed and transplanted to the back yard much of the liriopse and most of the iron plants that were formerly out front. Monies from the Andrew Ministry Team and the Building & Grounds Ministry Team funded these efforts. Enjoy! Hopefully, “mulch” more is to come.

HOW TO GIVE. There is a new online giving option through the Presbyterian Foundation at this link <http://covpresathens.org/wp/contributions/> . Or you can click on this link www.covpresathens.org and click on online giving. And as always you can mail your check to the church office. Thank you for your faithful giving!

FINANCIAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR TO DATE - Week #06
Anticipated Pledges \$51,923.08
Actual Pledges \$50,014.93
Thank you for your faithful giving!



Little Food Pantry – We continue to seek out new and faithful ways to respond to the needs of the food insecure and homeless friends in our community. UGA students built a Little Food Pantry on our church campus. It is located outside the doors of our fellowship hall. Little Food Pantries are scattered throughout Athens, and their purpose is to respond to the emergency food needs of hungry folks. We encourage you to help us keep our Little Food Pantry stocked with pop-top single serve canned goods that do not require cooking, peanut butter and jelly, packaged crackers, healthy snack items. Small individual personal hygiene items (ie: soap, deodorant, toothbrush and toothpaste, and shampoos) in a zip lock bag with a granola bar of some kind is also needed. Please remember everything must be sealed to prevent ant infestations...



The Covenant coffee closet still has lots of coffee, tea, and hot chocolate ! Although the regular office hours and services are suspended, the church is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays for the Food Pantry from 1 - 4 PM. *Please call the church office at 706-548-2756 and place your order and when you would like to pick it up. A food pantry volunteer will hand your order as you drive through the parking lot.* In this time of uncertainty, let's not forget the hard working farmers and their families who depend on the Equal Exchange folks to buy their coffee at a Fair Price !!!
Any questions please contact Sandy Whitney at sandrawhitney08@gmail.com.



If you need a helping hand or (just someone to reach out to you) during "Sheltering in Place due to the Covid-19 pandemic, please contact Congregational Care Ministry Team and we will do our best to be of assistance. Let us know of your needs by either calling Luanne Rigsby at (706) 769-1066 (home) or (706) 224-3828 (cell) or emailing her at luannerigsby@gmail.com or Don Bower at dbower@uga.edu.



Jesus said, "You give them something to eat."

Covenant's Emergency Food Pantry

Members, and friends of Covenant have been giving generously of their time and talents to the Emergency Food Pantry. As you can imagine, the need is great.

*the **Tuesday Food Pantry hours are 5PM-7PM.** This is being done with the thought that there may be people who work and are also in need of assistance from the Food Pantry. There also may be volunteers who work but would like to volunteer. The Thursday Food Pantry hours will remain the same: 1PM-4PM. A hearty THANK-YOU to the many volunteers who help feed our neighbors.*

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

STAY SAFE—If there is any reason at all that you should NOT physically volunteer-consider the following:

Make a financial donation to the Food Pantry by sending a check to Covenant and write "food pantry" in the subject line. *(You could send it in at the same time you send in your pledge).*

We can use grocery bags (paper or plastic), and small boxes to pack the food. If you call the church, someone could even come out to your car and get it.

If you are able to physically be present as a volunteer:

[Click the link below for an easy sign up](#) or call or email Betsy Pless 540-1719
bppless@gmail.com

You can just sign up for 1 day, or for multiple days. You can also share the 3-hour time slot with 2 friends!

HOW TO SIGN UP: Please sign up for Covenant Food Pantry!

Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

1. **Click this link** to go to our invitation page on SignUp.com: <https://signup.com/login/entry/611848298042>

2. **Enter your email address:** (You will NOT need to register an account on SignUp.com)

3. **Sign up!** Choose your spots - SignUp.com will send you an automated confirmation and reminders. Easy!

Note: *SignUp.com does not share your email address with anyone. If you prefer not to use your email address, please contact me and I can sign you up manually.*

