

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service, Sunday, Nov. 29:

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

THE COVENANTER

November 29, 2020

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

Advent

... a time of waiting in silence and stillness as the evening shadows lengthen

... a time of anticipating the birth of the baby of Bethlehem, God's coming to us in human form

... a time of preparing room in our manger-hearts for the gift of salvation

This Advent season there are some creative ways you and your loved ones can deepen your journey through this pandemic-laced wilderness of waiting. One of the most intriguing ways we will provide for you on a weekly basis is an interactive website called, *Advent Living Rooms*. This unique and fun offering is a gift of the Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda, Presbyterian Church in Canada. Designed by Rev. Tori Smit, Regional Minister of Faith Formation, this website will delight you as you connect with Living Rooms that open up seasonal stories, recipes, crafts, adventures, and music. So, here are the practical details.

Each week of Advent we will provide you with a web link and screenshot to one Advent Living Room. You may find these weekly links and Living Room screenshots on the church website, www.covpresathens.org, and our restructured church FaceBook page, Covenant Presbyterian Church of Athens, GA. To upload the link, all you will need to do is to copy and paste the link onto your browser. By clicking on the link you will be taken directly to the Living Room and will be able to interact with it.

Now, for a little bit about the Living Rooms.

Each Living Room looks very similar, but not identical; watch the Christmas tree each week and see how it is transformed. The white board on the living room wall will let you know what week it is as it invites you to click on the candle on the fireplace mantle first. This candle will open up to a video of a bible story that will shape the theme and activities for that week. These weekly stories come from *Young Children and Worship* by Sonja Stewart and Jerome Berryman, with each story building on the previous one as we travel on our way to Bethlehem.

After hearing the story, you can then click randomly around the room. The nativity set will reveal daily devotions making use of scripture and/or the *Spark Story Bible* with additional prayers and wondering questions. A musical instrument opens up to a new song and papers on the floor will reveal the words to lengthier songs for everyone to sing along. The mixing bowl on the table will take you to recipe for the travelers that week, and the cup with pencil crayons offer up a fun craft. And finally the window over the couch takes everyone outside for an adventure together.

And with that, here is the link and screenshot for you to use this week beginning Sunday, November 29: <https://bit.ly/3f84GzS>

Before you know it, the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany will be upon us, and our ministry teams are busy planning creative ways to deepen our understanding of the significance and transformational possibilities of these seasons. In the season of the pandemic, we are hoping to build on our connections as a family of God, so in the next few weeks we will include articles in the newsletter and on our website about worship, learning, mission, and fellowship opportunities for your participation.

Our immediate need, however, is for help enhancing our Christmas Eve virtual worship service. To that end, we are asking that you take a photo of you and your family members/friends holding lighted candles while standing in front of a "Christmasy scene", such as a Christmas tree, wreath, etc. Use a cellphone or other device, and make sure that you hold the cellphone or device **HORIZONTALLY** so that your images fit our YouTube screen.



We will include your photo in a montage set to music ("Silent Night", "Joy to the World") concluding the Christmas Eve virtual worship service. We ask that you send these DIGITAL photos to our "tech guy", Bob Trouteaud, either by e-mail, bob@trouteaud.com, or by texting, 404.405.6085. If you need assistance taking these photos, please contact Karen Wetherington and she will either answer your questions, refer you to someone who can answer your questions, or arrange a time for a volunteer to take your photograph.

Larson, and Leo, and Ada Brock
Are wonderful members of
Covenant's flock.

With smiles full of glee
And a dance style so free,
I could watch them dance 'round
the clock.

Dick ZZ



Graduates ZOOM Christmas Luncheon

Tuesday, December 8 at 12:30pm

Let's share our favorite stories about
Christmas memories and our hopes
and dreams for the coming year!

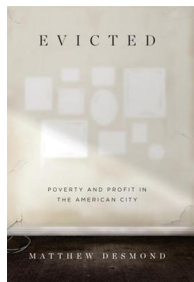
For a ZOOM invitation please contact
Rindy Trouteaud at
rindy@tgrouteaud.com. The link will be
emailed to you on
Monday, December 7th.

Wednesday afternoons beginning in January 2021, 4-5 p.m. "Radical Spirit" Feeling burnt-out from life, strung-out from social media, and put out by a society that always wants more from you? Beloved nun and social activist Joan Chittister, who appeared on Oprah's Super Soul Sunday, offers a practical, character-building, and inspirational guide to help you take control of your emotional life and redirect your spiritual destiny.

Joan Chittister, whom Publishers Weekly calls "one of the most well-known and trusted contemporary spiritual authors," is a rabble-rousing force of nature for social justice, and a passionate proponent of personal faith and spiritual fulfillment. Drawing on little known, ancient teachings of the saints, Sister Joan offers a practical program to help transform our thinking and rebel against our fears, judgments and insecurities.

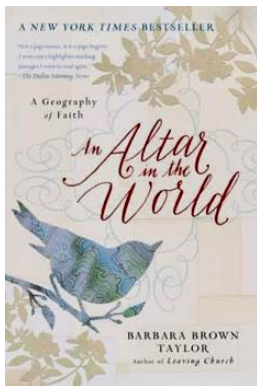
"Freedom from anxiety, worry, and tensions at home and work, comes when we give ourselves to something greater," she argues. "We need to seek wisdom rather than simply facts, to think before speaking, and in turn create respectful communities." With a series of twelve simple rules for healthy spiritual living, Chittister not only reminds us, but pleads with us, to develop enduring values by shifting our attention to how God wants us to live. This book will teach you how to accomplish this.

Rindy Trouteaud will facilitate this ZOOM gathering after the Thanksgiving holiday on Wednesdays, 4-5 p.m. The starting date will be announced, and if you'd like to purchase the book "Radical Spirit", you may call the church office to place your order or you may buy your book from Amazon.com. A number of price and format options are available. (Books are \$10 each)



Join the Social Justice Book Club! Next Zoom Meeting December 1 at 7pm.

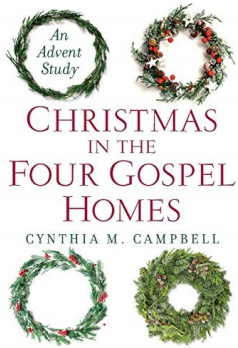
We will dive into the MacArthur Genius Award winner Matthew Desmond's *Eviction: Poverty and Profit in the American City*. Each week we will examine the irrevocable damage caused by evictions, systemic poverty, discrimination, and exploitation. Based on years of entrenched fieldwork and meticulously assembled data, through *Evicted*, we will explore the causes of extreme poverty and fresh ideas for solving the devastating, uniquely American problem. We will cover part 3, pages 204-293. To receive your Zoom invite please email Karen at kwetherington@covpresathens.org



-Tuesday Mornings, 10-11 a.m. Beginning December 1—In her critically acclaimed *Leaving Church*, "a beautiful, absorbing memoir" according to *The Dallas Morning News*, Barbara Brown Taylor wrote about her experience leaving full-time ministry to become a professor, a decision that stretched the boundaries of her faith. Now, in her stunning follow-up, *An Altar in the World*, she shares how she learned to encounter God far beyond the walls of the church. Taylor reveals meaningful ways to discover the sacred in the small things we do and see, from simple practices such as walking, working, and prayer. Something as ordinary as hanging clothes on a clothesline becomes an act of meditation if we pay attention to what we're doing and take time to notice the sights, smells, and sounds around us. Making eye contact with the cashier at

the grocery store becomes a moment of true human connection. Allowing yourself to get lost leads to new discoveries. As we incorporate these practices into our daily lives, we begin to discover altars everywhere we go, in nearly everything we do. Mark Harper will facilitate this ZOOM gathering. The starting date will be announced, and if you'd like to purchase a book, you may call the church office to place your order or you may buy your book from Amazon.com. A number of price and format options are available. *Please email Karen at kwetherington@covpresathens.org to order the book and receive your zoom invitation. (Books are \$10 each)*

EMMAUS ROAD CLASS-



Experience how Christmas is observed in each of the four Gospels in this study, *Christmas Accounts in the Gospels*, written by Cynthia M. Campbell. This creative, four-session adult study will compare each of the Gospels to homes that Christians visit. Illustrations of each Gospel house are provided by artist Kevin Burns based on his interpretation of the shape and character of each Gospel. Together we will be challenged to see Christmas from the different perspectives offered in each house as we further reflect on the mystery of Jesus.

This class meets on Sunday mornings, 10 a.m., and is facilitated by Bob Trouteaud. It will get underway, Nov. 29, the first Sunday of Advent, and you are invited to jump right into our study! No need to purchase books, and be sure to check the church website to access the ZOOM invitation.

Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers Advent is around the corner and here are our youth group activities for December:

Middle schoolers - during the month of December you are invited to be a part of upcoming Advent worship services by taking and submitting photos to the church technology team. Think about where you might see Jesus today - in your neighborhood, outdoors in nature, maybe your school, on the soccer field, at your grandparents' home, in the Chick fil-A drive-thru, sitting in a Zaxby's booth, in the Walmart parking lot, anywhere you think Jesus might hang out - and using your cellphone **HORIZONTALLY**, snap photos of scenes. Then, send those photos in a text or e-mail to: **bob@trouteaud.com** or **404-405-6085**. We will use your photos in a montage at the end of our Advent worship services beginning Sunday, November 29 and continuing through Sunday, December 20. You will be listed under the photography credits on the YouTube videos that include your photos. Questions? Contact Rindy by phone or text, 678-231-7556.

High schoolers - this month we begin designing and assembling our Christmas float that will "visit" our friends and neighbors who are homebound and wanting to see and hear the Good News of Christmas in a way that lets them know how much they are loved and missed. Youth group leaders will set up outdoor work sessions in consultation with you. These work sessions will require masking and social distancing and will be arranged to meet your busy schedules. Bert Ballard-Myer will contact you via the app, GroupMe. If you need to install this app on your cellphone or other device, please call, text, or e-mail Bert, mysammie1@yahoo.com and 706-207-2665.

Dear Fellow Covenanter –

The Cov Presby Session hopes to implement a fundraising effort to create a financial base for installing a renewable, site-producing, electrical energy system using solar panels.

Ideally, the committee to lead this effort would feature interested members from the Building and Grounds MT, the Climate Change Awareness Task Force, the Finance MT, and the Green Dream Team. Members of these groups have been invited to take part, so now may be the moment to expand this opportunity to other interested parties.



Would you be willing to serve? If so, please alert me at your earliest convenience via e-mail at: richreav@uga.edu.

Participants will become equipped to explain about as well as answer questions for members and friends of Covenant relating to the:

- ♦ Project costs and component parts associated with the system
- ♦ Benefits of such a facility, in terms of long term carbon footprint reduction as well as financial savings from on-site electricity production
- ♦ Size and location options for this solar panel array;
- ♦ Completion time frames for necessary elements of the undertaking, and how these phases relate to payment of needed pledged
- ♦ Ongoing relationship with the church's current electricity supplier, Georgia Power

In this current era when energy consumers are being asked to examine their utilization choices, the Covenant Session believes the opportunities presented by employing a solar panel installation option should no pass by unexamined.

Kind regards, *Rich Reeves*, Co-Chair, B&G MT



1 Chuck Rosenberger	8 Sara Cooney	15 Julie Bower	24 Dianne Simpson
2 Bob Smith	Jim Newland	Sharon Edwards	Holly Wolfe
3 Frank Allen	Donald Whitehead, Jr.	William Kisaalita	27 William Sperr
4 Tim Foutz	9 Eli Stone	17 Gabe Harper	31 Lindsey Bowden
5 Susan Paul	11 Peggy Johnson	18 Jim McMin	
6 Zak Huberty	Rachel Wolfe	Eve Bower	
	12 Sally Boardman	19 Kay Brooks	

Prayer Concerns: Jim Bowden received excellent news on Wed. 11/25, from surgery he had earlier in the week. It is all contained & removed, no chemo required. And they want to thank everyone for their concern, prayers and love: Anne Page with a hip infection and in hospice care at Avery Place; Shirley Hunt now in rehab at Landmark Hospital in Athens; Ginger Davis-Beck doing some better after cancer treatments; June Meyer's niece diagnosed with cancer; Pauline Marshall at Highland Hills #112; and for our Nation.

Shirley Hunt would love to hear from her church family while she is in rehab. Cards can be mailed to: Landmark Hospital,
Attention: Shirley Hunt Room #206, 775 Sunset Drive, Athens, GA 30606.

Daily Bible Readings

Please read your Advent Devotional

"A Song In Our Hearts!"

[2020 Advent Devotional - Covenant Presbyterian Church](#)
[- Athens, GA \(covpresathens.org\)](#)

If you would like a hard copy please let me know at
kwetherington@covpresathens.org.



Little Food Pantry –

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, 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 (air tight) to prevent ant infestations...*Please no raisins.*

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 #22
Anticipated Pledges \$190,384.70
Actual Pledges—\$188,212.30
Thank you for your faithful giving!



'Tis the season to do GOOD (and be jolly!) How about getting a jump on your Christmas shopping by purchasing an Equal Exchange Christmas packet of coffee, tea, and hot chocolate? Your purchase will delight your loved ones AND you'll help our hardworking farmers and their families who depend on the Equal Exchange folks to buy their products at a fair price.

Here is a list of items that are available:

Coffee both ground (drip) and a few decaf \$7.50 each

Congo beans \$10 each

Green Tea with Ginger, Chamomile, Peppermint, and English Breakfast tea \$4 each box

Hot Cocoa Mix (regular or spicy) \$5.00 each

Chocolate bars (\$3.00 each) can be ordered

Simply make a selection of desired products and call the church office, 706-548-2756, with your order. Volunteers will package your products and have a bag ready and waiting for you to pick up on Tuesdays, 5-7 pm and Thursdays, 1-4 pm. A food pantry volunteer will hand your order as you drive through the church parking lot.

Any questions please contact Sandy Whitney at sandrawhitney08@gmail.com.

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.*

Check out Online Athens report on Covenants Emergency Food Pantry Ministry:

https://www.onlineathens.com/gallery/GA/20201123/PHOTOGALLERY/112309993/PH/1?fbclid=IwAR3-uZv5qyR09_zOQf06il7MJG4uQABYVnfWP8FKSZAZd2qm-t6mCtUieAk



The Congregational Care Ministry Team invites all bakers and would-be bakers to help us share the love of God with our hungry neighbors this holiday season. We would like to give containers of home-baked cookies to our friends visiting our Food Pantry on Thursday, December 17 and Tuesday, December 22. If you would like to share your "flour-y, sugar-y" gifts and talents with our most vulnerable neighbors, please bring your packaged cookies to the fellowship hall the days before our distribution dates so that our wonderful Food Pantry volunteers can hand them out. You may want to call the church office to make sure that someone is on hand to receive your cookies.