

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service, Sunday, Jan. 03:

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

THE COVENANTER

January 10, 2021

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

Congregational Zoom Meeting (your zoom invitation will be in your email)
Sunday, January 10 at 11am

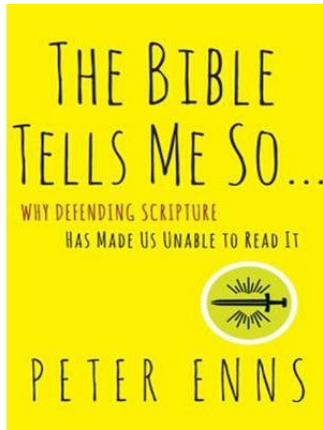
Join us as we install the new 2023 class of Elders:

Clayton Adams, Linda Koehler, Kathy Boardman, and Jennifer Frey (serving a second term).

If you are an ordained elder, or if you have been ordained to ministry in another tradition, you will be invited to participate in a virtual "Laying on of hands" ceremony as we welcome our sisters and brothers into their term of servant leadership on Covenant's session.

A heartfelt thank you to elders who have fulfilled their term: Ellen Stoneburner, Luanne Rigsby, Helen Epps, Katy Terry, Paige Cummings, Mary Barnett and Tamara Stam.

* **FAMILY PROMISE "HOST" WEEK– January 17-24** *
* **What in God's Name are you doing?** The Family Promise (formerly IHN) program continues to be an *
* important part of the compassionate solution for homeless families with children in our community. *
* Our congregation has been a vital part of this caring ministry since its inception almost 20 years *
* ago. (Shirley Hunt was one of our first volunteer coordinators and a longtime volunteer.) ❤ *
* Although during this time of Covid we are not physically hosting guest families at Covenant, we are *
* taking our turn for 4 separate weeks this year as one of 13+ congregations who volunteer to lead *
* in providing financial assistance and physical presence and support. Our next week for this primary *
* support is January 17-24. *
* Milledge Avenue Baptist Church (MABC) is currently housing 2 families (a Mom and her 8 year old *
* son; and a Mom & Dad and 2 daughters, 9 and 6). A large extended family (8) is staying in another *
* location, isolating while awaiting a new baby's arrival soon and will need only grocery gift card *
* assistance from us. At MABC we will be providing daytime and evening hosts in 2 hour shifts, *
* overnight hosts, and preparing evening for the 2 families (and evening hosts) housed there. *
* Additionally we will contribute grocery gift cards to them for purchase of breakfast and lunch *
* ingredients (each family has its own bedroom and limited cooking and food storage facilities). The *
* families have their own transportation. There is a short video showing the set-up for hosts and *
* guests at MABC that can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/lkPWspSkbcE> *
* If you would like to be a part of this week of outreach to these families, there are a couple of ways *
* you can help. You may mail financial contributions toward gift card purchases to Covenant; check *
* make out to Covenant and designated "Family Promise host week". You may also visit the online *
* Sign-Up Genius and choose opportunities for being a volunteer at MABC or preparing and dropping *
* ping off evening meals. Access the Sign-Up Genius site here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go4090f4ca5aa29a4fe3fdpainterfaith> Please feel free to contact Phil Hale at 706-614-0812 or *
* Steve Rathbun (814) 418-0785 for questions or additional information. *



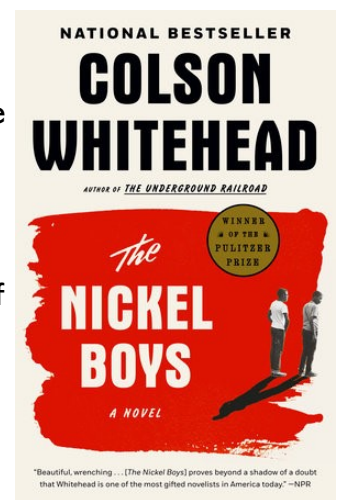
This Sunday, January 10th at 10:00 am, Emmaus Road Sunday School Class will begin a new seven-week study. Each week we will watch a video (17-25 minutes long) followed by facilitated discussion. This study is based on the book, *The Bible Tells Me So*, by Peter Enns.

This controversial Bible scholar and author of *The Evolution of Adam* recounts his transformative spiritual journey in which he discovers a new, more honest way to love and appreciate God's Word. Trained as an evangelical Bible scholar, Peter Enns loved the Scriptures and shared his devotion with students as an instructor at Westminster Theological Seminary. But the further he studied the Bible, the more he found himself confronted by questions that could neither be answered within the rigid framework of his religious instruction or accepted among the conservative evangelical community.

Rejecting the increasingly complicated intellectual games used by conservative Christians to "protect" the Bible, Enns was conflicted. *Is this what God really requires? How could God's plan for divine inspiration mean ignoring what is really written in the Bible?* These questions eventually cost Enns his job—but they also opened a new spiritual path for him to follow.

The Bible Tells Me So chronicles Enns's spiritual odyssey, how he came to see beyond restrictive doctrine and learned to embrace God's Word as it is actually written. As he explores questions progressive evangelical readers of Scripture commonly face yet fear voicing, Enns reveals that they are the very questions that God wants us to consider—the essence of our spiritual study.

Covenant Social Justice Book Club begins Monday, January 25 at 7pm (and continue for 2 more sessions 2/1 and 2/8 at 7pm.) We will dive into Colson Whitehead's 2019 novel "The Nickle Boys." Based on true events, "The Nickle Boys" is about a reform school in Florida that operated for over 100 years and was responsible for a untold number of horrors' for the young people committed to its care. Whitehead's story came on the heels of an investigation by university archaeologists when they began discovering the remains of dozens of adolescent bodies. For the first week please read the prologue and chapters 1-6 (or pages 1-69) of "The Nickle Boys" by Colson Whitehead. Contact Travis at twilliams@covpresathens.org or Karen at kwetherington@covpresathens.org to receive your ZOOM invitation.



Thank you!

Personnel Committee & Covenant Family for
our lovely gifts during the holiday season.

Your Office Staff,

Judy, Robyn and Karen

Beginning Wednesday, January 27, 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). At our first gathering we will look at the first two chapter of Sr. Chittister's timely book. Contact Rindy for your Zoom Invitation at rindy@trouteaud.com.

Dear Fellow Covenanters –

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 Reaves*, Co-Chair, B&G MT



January 8, 2021

Dear Covenant Family,

Like many of you, the events of this past week have left me profoundly alert to how fragile life really is, whether it is the life of our nation, the church, or simply those of us who are trying to be human in de-humanizing times. On a personal note, and as I write this, I am preparing to record my portion of this week's worship service and come out of a quarantine necessitated by a positive test result for COVID-19. I realize this news may be confusing since I also tested positive back at the beginning of the summer. I am now convinced that was a false positive result, though I was not so lucky this time around. While my symptoms have been mild, I am deeply grateful that I seem to have broken free from the low-grade fever and fatigue that defined my days for nearly a week.

In the midst of lots of feelings of vulnerability and frustration, especially about our national state of affairs, I have found myself reminded over and over of the encouragement and love I experience through my connection to you. In so many ways, including gifts of food and messages of support from you, I keep realizing that I am not on this journey of discipleship alone. More recently, you have gifted me with a generous Christmas check that is already proving to be extremely helpful as I work to make some needed repairs on my house.

So let me simply say thank you: for your friendship, for your emotional and financial support, and for your willingness to join me in the calling we share through our baptism to be Christ's church in this particular time and place. I am blessed more than I can adequately say.

Grace and peace,

Mark

Prayer Concerns: Family & Friends in the passing of Shirley Hunt, Jan 7. She was surrounded by her loving family; Sally Boardman, and David, following very successful surgery that completely removed the brain mass; Anne Page with a hip infection and in hospice care at Avery Place; Ginger Davis-Beck now at home receiving care; Pauline Marshall at Highland Hills #112; and for the Tweedell's dog, Jeff very seriously ill.

Dear family and friends,

Sally got home noon on New Year's Day. Such a blessing for her to get a good night's sleep without interruption. I see improvement day to day in her strength and mental clarity. It frustrates her, of course, that it is not happening faster, but she knows it will take some time. It's a miracle that we're even where we are at this point in her recovery. Your prayers have been heard and have sustained us and everyone involved in her care. For that we are most grateful, and also for your offers of help. Rest assured I will take you up on them? Love, Peace and continued Blessings to you all, *David Boardman*

Daily Bible Readings January 11—17, 2021

Monday Psalm 139: 1-12
Tuesday Psalm 139: 13-18
Wednesday I Samuel 3: 1-10
Thursday I Samuel 3: 11-20
Friday Matthew 25: 1-13
Saturday Matthew 25: 31-46
Sunday John 1: 43-51



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. Thank you to all that help keep the Little Food Pantry stocked.*

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

FINANCIAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR TO DATE - Week #26
Anticipated Pledges \$ 225,000.00
Actual Pledges—\$253,072.56
Thank you for your faithful giving!

Covenant's Emergency Food Pantry

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

Covenant's Emergency Food Pantry days and hours have changed.

It is now on THURSDAYS, 1pm—4pm.

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 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.*

For the month of December 2020 the Covenant Food Pantry served 1,518 people that includes 593 children and 173 senior adults. Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers and the many folks that contribute financially to this very timely ministry.