

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service, Sunday, Jan. 17:

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

THE COVENANTER January 17, 2021

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

Prayer Vigil for Peace and a Fruitful Presidency!

The congregation is invited to participate in a ZOOM prayer vigil on Tuesday, January 19 at 7pm. Mark and Rindy will offer prayers as a new administration to be sworn in. You are invited to offer prayers as well. We hope to see you Tuesday evening. You will receive your Zoom invite by Monday evening.

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 off evening meals. Access the Sign-Up Genius site here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090f4ca5aa29a4fe3-fpainterfaith>. Please feel free to contact Phil Hale at 706-614-0812 or Steve Rathbun (814) 418-0785 for questions or additional information.

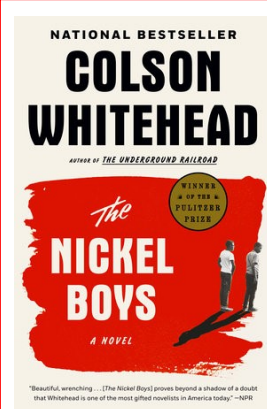
Sunday, January 17th at 10:00 am, Emmaus Road Sunday School Class

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 Nickel Boys." Based on true events, "The Nickel 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 Nickel Boys" by Colson Whitehead. Contact Travis at twilliams@covpresathens.org or Karen at kwetherington@covpresathens.org to receive your ZOOM invitation.

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 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 Reaves*, Co-Chair, B&G MT



Dear Covenant Family,

Thank you for your generous Christmas gift! It was such a wonderful reminder of the ties that bind us together in this strangely sacred time.

To know that my ministry to, for, and with you was so deeply appreciated fills me with gratitude. It inspires me to consider new and creative ways to fulfill my ordination vows to "serve (you) with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love." In these uncertain times, may we all be filled with the peace that accompanies the Love-that Came-Down-at-Christmas, a peace that passes our human understanding. Thank you, thank you, Friends! *Rindy*



God's Spirit is always working, equipping our communities of faith with the people we need to carry out the ministry of Christ. Sometimes that means our loss is another's gain, though I hope we can rejoice that ultimately the Body of Christ will be strengthened.

Recently the Committee on Ministry of Northeast Georgia Presbytery approved the call of **Jacob Douylliez** to become the contracted, non-installed pastor of Eatonton Presbyterian Church. Jacob began his new ministry on January 1st. We give deep thanks for his wonderful, creative leadership as our Director of Music and wish him God's peace and many blessings as he continues his journey in Eatonton.

We welcomed **Robyn Malone** to our office staff this past summer. Robyn has dedicated herself to learning the receipts book-keeping ministry that Sharon Edwards did so faithfully before her retirement. We are grateful that Robyn's eye for detail and sharp sense of humor are now gracing our office several hours each week.

By now, you have probably either met or heard from **Travis Williams**, our Neighborhood Ministries Coordinator hired back in October. Whether he is speaking to our adult Sunday School classes via Zoom, making an announcement about the work of the food pantry in worship, coordinating UGA student volunteers in our kitchen, or leading a book study on the crisis of eviction in our recently launched Social Justice Book Club, Travis has quickly become a presence of wisdom and compassion in the Covenant community.

One of Travis's key gifts is his ability to draw in kind-hearted, justice-seeking folks from outside Covenant's immediate family to join with us in being the hands of Jesus. And so, for example, throughout the pandemic, our food pantry has had wonderful volunteer support from members of St. Gregory the Great Episcopal and Milledge Avenue Baptist churches. In addition, young people working with the Grow It, Know It food program through UGA have taken over our kitchen one day a week to prepare nutritious meals for children in the East Athens Community Center's after school program. And the groceries we distribute to our food insecure neighbors (over 1500 people in December alone!) have been supplemented by wonderful fresh produce from the UGarden. Thank you, Travis, for helping us keep our eyes on the prize of God's Beloved Community!

Prayer Concerns: Kathryn Fowler's cousin, Patsy Gregory in Conway, SC, struggling with covid; Patti Huberty's sister in law, Shelly Coe, hospitalized with heart complications; 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 in the passing of their beloved dog, Jeff.

Daily Bible Readings January 18—24, 2021

Monday Psalm 62: 5-12
Tuesday Jonah 1
Wednesday Jonah 2
Thursday Jonah 3
Friday Jonah 4
Saturday I Corinthians 7: 29-31



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 #28
Anticipated Pledges \$ 242,307.70
Actual Pledges—\$256,622.56
Thank you for your faithful giving!

Congregational Care Zoom Meeting— Thursday, January 28 at 7pm

It's the start of a new year, and time for the Congregational Care committee to put our virtual heads together and make some plans. The most pressing thing will be getting volunteers to send out Valentine cards, but we will have other things on the agenda, and we need to brainstorm ways to minister to our congregation in this time of Covid. So we have scheduled a zoom meeting for Thursday, January 28, at 7:00 pm. It shouldn't last more than an hour. Karen will send out the zoom invitations the day before. So put the 28th on your calendar, and be looking for the invitation in your email. 'Looking forward to seeing your smiling faces on the computer screen! Linda Koehler

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.