

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service, Sunday, Jan. 24:

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

## THE COVENANTER

### January 24, 2021

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



**FAMILY PROMISE**— We have had a good week hosting our Family Promise families at Milledge Avenue Baptist Church. The next 3 weeks at MABC will be hosted by Union Christian Church

(Watkinsville), MABC, and Bethlehem United Methodist Church, respectively. As you can see this is a community-wide ministry of which Covenant has been and remains a vital part. The Sign Up Genius website is always active and, if able, you are encouraged to volunteer not only during 'our' week but any week.

Many thanks to you for your very generous support this week with your time, meals, and financial gifts. We exceeded the funds needed for grocery gift cards and will hold the remainder for use during future host weeks. *Phil Hale*

The Covenant Re-Opening Task Force met on Thursday evening, Jan. 21, via Zoom. Those present included Rich Reaves, Chris Wilson, Jennifer Frey, Tamara Stam, Pam Knox, Mark Harper, Rindy Trouteaud, and Julie Bower, Chair. The purpose of our conversations is to keep a watch on the local COVID-19 impact and advise the Session on the prospects of returning safely to in-person worship. We reviewed the current COVID-19 data for Clarke County and the state of Georgia. Since the last meeting, in November, the positivity rate has increased. The Georgia Department of Public Health reported a 17% positivity rate for the 14-day period ending Jan. 16. Just for comparison, in order to be classified in the GREEN, or safe zone, the positivity rate must be 5% or lower.

Two factors that have complicated the landscape are the emergence of variant strains of the virus, and the fact that the vaccine supplies have been much lower than anticipated. As a result of the vaccine issue, it has been difficult for people 65 and over to get the vaccine. The trickle down effect is predicted to mean it will take longer than originally believed to get the vaccine to every person who wants to get it. We may now be looking at late summer or early Fall for a meaningful vaccine program to be nearing completion. Regarding the variant strains, we will likely not know if they will be an issue until March.

While we feel very hopeful about the turn-around possibilities of the vaccine, our feeling is that we are not in a position to predict when it will be safe to return to in-person worship. We will continue to monitor the local positivity rate and, most definitely, the availability of the vaccine. In the meantime, our best posture is to strictly follow CDC Guidelines, and with the threat of the variant strains we are advised to truly double-down on every good practice in our tool kits. It is suggested that masks include 2-3 layers of protection. Our next meeting is scheduled for March 18, at 7 PM, via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by *Julie Bower*, chair.

The Czech Partnership network has invited us to make contributions to a Lenten Devotional being prepared for all congregations in the network..  
Please consider submitting a reflection, poem, photo, or other creative work according to the guidelines outlined below. Thank you for helping to strengthen our friendships with sisters and brothers in the Czech Republic and the US.

*Be Merciful, Just As Your Father is Merciful (Luke 6: 36)*

### **ECCB-PCUSA Partnership 2021 Lenten Devotion**

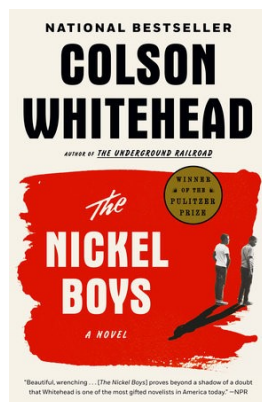
**Please select a date by Friday, January 29th and write your name and email address on the form:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1\\_el0587b-88jXI81czr\\_duNBdE9agIg7Y4oococIuvM/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_el0587b-88jXI81czr_duNBdE9agIg7Y4oococIuvM/edit?usp=sharing)

Please submit your devotion to Deborah Murdoch at damurdoch@gmail.com by Friday, February 12th. Early submissions are welcome! A couple of notes to keep in mind.

- ♦ A devotion is simply a little sharing from the heart with a connection to a scripture passage. It is written for the purpose of inspiring us to have hope for each day through our faith in Christ. Be yourself in writing a devotional. No need to be deeply theological or intellectual unless this is your style.
- ♦ It begins with a scripture passage. In the body of the devotional, you can tell a story that related to the passage and end it with the point you are wishing to make. A short prayer that is related to the story comes at the end.
- ♦ If you are able to submit in English and Czech please do so. We will coordinate translations for those who cannot submit in both languages.





**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](mailto:twilliams@covpresathens.org) or Karen at [kwetherington@covpresathens.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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



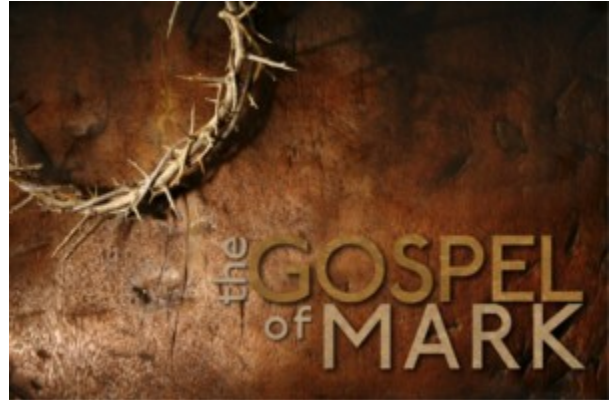
Zebediah and Jeremiah Hendricks interrupted while working to make progress on installing a handrail and pull bar to the left of the sloped sidewalk NE of the Worship Center, that's near the "exit" driveway.

Along with Andrew Zimdars they have also been clearing out the tree-line and parking spaces on that same side of the church.

**Prayer Concerns:** The Wiegel's biking friend, M.C. Boserop and family, in the passing of her husband, Daniel, Saturday, Jan. 16 after a long illness; Gloria Langford, Beth Nunnally's mother, recovering from stroke 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.

**Daily Bible Readings** January 25—31, 2021

Monday Psalm 111  
Tuesday I Corinthians 8: 1-13  
Wednesday Deuteronomy 18: 15-20  
Thursday Deuteronomy 34: 10-12  
Friday Mark 1: 14-15  
Saturday Mark 1: 16-20  
Sunday Mark 1: 21-28



**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](http://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 #30**  
Anticipated Pledges \$ 259,615.39  
Actual Pledges—\$267,942.56  
*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](mailto: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.*



# ***Online Healing Grief Workshop***

Wednesdays, February 17– April 14, 2021

3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

You can download Webex on your phone or access their website at [webex.com](https://webex.com) in order to join the sessions once we send out the link.

A nine-week workshop for those who have lost someone through death.  
The loss does not have to be cancer related.

## Topics:

Getting Acquainted	Stress Management
Understanding Grief	Anniversaries
Remembering	Memorialization
Accepting	Role Changes
Closure & Evaluation	

Pre-registration is required for this workshop. **Spots are limited!**

Please call **706-475-4900**

This free workshop is sponsored by the "In Their Shoes" Walk