

Please click here to view Covenants Worship Service, Sunday, April 18:

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

THE COVENANTER

April 18, 2021

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

Covenant's Re-Opening Task Force met Thursday, April 15, via Zoom. Those present included Mark Harper, Rindy Trouteaud, Pam Knox, Jennifer Frey, and Julie Bower, chair.

The best news might be that many of our Covenant folks have been able to get the COVID vaccine. The number who successfully get their second dose climbs every week. In Clarke County 17.2% of the general population is fully vaccinated, as of April 15. There were 68 new COVID cases last week in Clarke County. The Northeast Health District's seven-day rolling average of added cases increased for the fourth day in a row, as of April 15. Clarke County recorded two new deaths last week. Both Oconee County and Clarke County reported an increase in the seven-day rolling average of added cases of COVID-19, as of yesterday.

Earlier in the pandemic, a set of guidelines was established for those who wish to meet outside on the grounds at Covenant, in small groups. Following the advice of the CDC, we recommended that small groups (10-12 people) could safely meet outside, with masks and 6 ft social distancing. While we are aware that some folks would like to see the church ease the guidelines as more people are vaccinated, we are trying to follow the recommendations of the leading COVID researchers. Until the community gets the COVID case numbers down further, we are committed to this outdoor plan. Even with two full doses of vaccine, it is recommended that we continue to follow the CDC safe practices. If everyone begins to ease up, and goodness knows we are all ready for life to return to "normal," with transmission rates as high as they are it will become increasingly difficult to get the virus truly under control. The increase in variants (virus mutations) is a factor of how much virus continues to thrive in our communities. It is a vicious cycle. The new normal means that we may have the risk of the COVID virus with us for a long time. Our best hope, however, is that the risk will be very low. We are not "there" yet. For these reasons, we are recommending to the Session that groups (Covenant-based and community-based) not use our indoor facility until at least July 2021.

There are churches in our Presbytery who have returned to in-person worship. There are churches who have returned and then closed down again. There are churches that have recently experienced loss. We still have our eye on a recommendation to the Session to regather in the Fall. Until then, we applaud the beautiful virtual weekly worship services, the weekly Zoom Sunday School opportunities, the weekly Bible study and book study groups, Presbyterian Women, food distribution team, and others who are faithfully and creatively gathering to keep the Covenant spirit strong.

Respectfully submitted by *Julie Bower*.



Our young people, preschoolers - high schoolers, have received in the mail this week, new spiritual formation resources for use at home. Families with children, preschool - fifth grade, will receive Illustrated Ministry's *An Invitation for Families*. This spiritual formation resource contains Bible stories, activities for families to engage in together, and coloring pages. Each week families will be invited to explore together one biblical story, and these stories will be listed on our church website. Middle schoolers and high schoolers will receive Illustrated Ministry's *Psalms Devotional* and each week our young people will be encouraged to reflect on a psalm through readings, music links, and activities designed to deepen understanding of the psalm. The "psalm of the week" will be listed on the church's website.

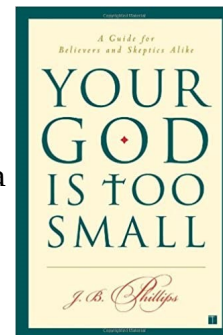
WEEK DAY BOOK STUDIES

TUESDAY MORNING BOOK STUDY—

Next Zoom Book Study, Tuesday, April 20 at 10am

Join us as we look at the book, *Your God is Too Small!*. A groundbreaking work of faith which challenges the constraints of traditional religion. In his discussion of God author J.B. Phillips encourages Christians to redefine their understanding of a creator without labels or earthly constraints and instead search for a meaningful concept of God. Facilitated by Mark Harper.

Please email Karen at karenwetherington@covpresathens.org for a zoom invitation.



IN DEFENSE OF
KINDNESS

Why It Matters,
How It Changes Our Lives, and
How It Can Save the World



Bruce Reyes-Chow

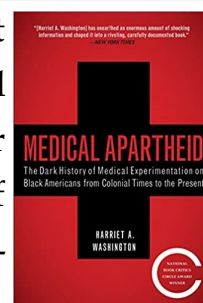
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON BOOK STUDY—

next Zoom Book Study Wednesday, April 21 at 4p.m.

When did kindness become a sign of weakness? What if kindness actually has the power to change the world? Join us as we share a conversation about kindness using Bruce Reyes-Chow's book, *In Defense of Kindness: Why It Matters, How It Changes Lives, and How It Can Save the World*. According to Reyes-Chow, culture is at a crossroads when it comes to kindness. If you would like a copy of this book, please call the church office and speak with Karen Wetherington, 706.548.2756. If you would

like a ZOOM invitation for our conversations, please contact Rindy Trouteaud, rindy@trouteaud.com.

Join the Covenant Social Justice Book Club as we explore Harriet Washington's, *Medical Apartheid*. This book details the ways both slaves and freedmen were used in hospitals for experiments conducted without their knowledge and tackles modern issues, revealing the root causes of many of the disparities that we see today with COVID-19. No one concerned with issues of public health and racial justice can afford not to read this eye-opening book. So Join us starting **Monday, April 26th @ 7 PM** as we embark on a powerful journey. Please read the introduction and chapters 1-7. Send Karen an email if you would like to receive a ZOOM invitation for this book study, kwetherington@covpresathens.org.





ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING 2021! For more than 70 years, One Great Hour of Sharing has provided us a way to share God's love with our neighbors in need. In fact, OGHS is the single largest way Presbyterians come together every year to work toward a better world. Presbyterians have joined with millions of other Christians through One Great Hour of Sharing to share God's love with people experiencing need. Your gifts support ministries of disaster response, refugee assistance and resettlement, and community development that help people find safe refuge, start new lives and work together to strengthen their families and communities. The Presbyterian Hunger Program receives 36 percent of undesignated gifts, while Self-Development of People and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance each receives 32 percent. Please indicate on the memo portion of your check or giving envelope OGHS. *Thank you for your generous giving!*

Thank you to all who have provided floral arrangements in the past. We especially appreciate the amazing talent of Juergen Wiegel, who has contributed his time and skill to provide beautiful arrangements and to coordinating the floral schedule for many years. If you would be willing to provide a flower arrangement for weekly virtual worship services, please check the dates below. We are now hoping to provide arrangements for Mar 21 through June 27. It is important to note that the services are actually recorded on Fridays, every week. This means that the flowers need to be placed in the worship center on Friday morning, by 10 AM. Please use the following link to view the available dates and to sign up. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409084AA5AA22A20-provide> . For further information please contact Julie Bower (bower.julie@gmail.com) or Karen Wetherington (kwetherington@covpresathens.org) The Worship Ministry Team appreciates each one who contributes to the beauty of our worship services in this way. *Thank you!*



Please Update your directory:

Carolyn Steuer

1400 Live Oak Lane, Apt 2103

Athens, GA 30606

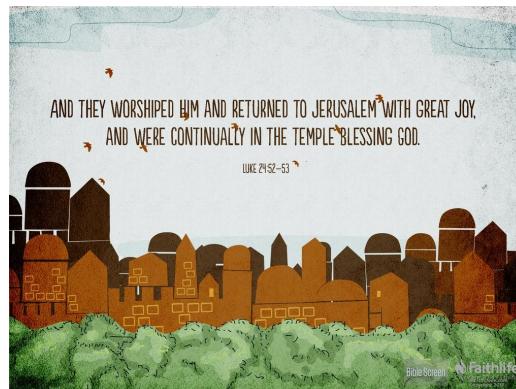
706-739-7677

Email: kakisteuer@gmail.com

PRAYER CONCERNS: Anna Holshouser as she considers the best care options for herself and Gene; Anne Page in hospice care at Avery Place; Pauline Marshall at Highland Hills #112.

Daily Bible Readings—April 19—25

Monday	Psalm 23
Tuesday	Acts 3: 1-11
Wednesday	Acts 3: 12-26
Thursday	Acts 4: 1-22
Friday	Acts 4: 23-37
Saturday	I John 3: 16-24
Sunday	Luke 24: 44-51

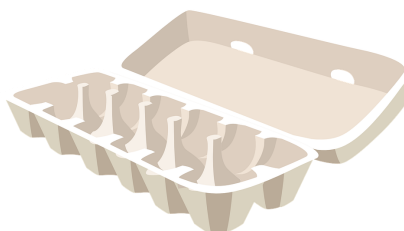


Little Food Pantry – We encourage you to help us keep our Little Food Pantry stocked with pop-top single serve canned goods that do not require cooking, peanut butter, packaged crackers, healthy snack items. Small individual personal hygiene items (ie: soap, deodorant, toothbrush and toothpaste, and 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 church office. Thank you for your faithful giving!

FINANCIAL REPORT
FISCAL YEAR TO DATE - Week #41
Anticipated Pledges \$ 354,807.85 Actual
Pledges— \$ 368,477.47
Thank you for your faithful giving!
OGHS—\$1,750.00

The Athens Area Emergency Food Bank is in need of Egg cartons! You can bring them by the church, Tuesdays 10am—12 noon, Thursdays, 1pm—4pm or on Fridays, 10am—4pm. Thanks!





ITEMS NEEDED! Yes! Covenant is still collecting these items for families in need. They will be distributed during the food pantry distribution.

Gently used: COATS for ADULTS & KIDS, WARM SOCKS, WARM HATS and SCARFS.

Also needed are sweatpants, sweatshirts and socks! AND.....children's summer clothes,

Personal size shampoos and conditioners, lotions, toothpastes, etc (like you get by staying at a hotel) for distribution during the Thursday food distributions.

Please drop them off at the church during Food Pantry hours, Thursdays 1pm – 4pm or Office hours, Tuesday 10am – noon, and Fridays 10am – 4pm. *Thanks!*

Hellmann's Goes Cloudy! When you wash your Hellmann's mayonnaise jars, in preparation for recycling them, you may notice that the jar has a cloudy tint. This is because many of Hellmann's Mayonnaise jars are now made of 100% food-safe plastic material. This plastic is not as clear as the previous packaging material, which was only partly recycled plastic. At first, "recycled" plastic jars and bottles were made in 3 layers. The outside and inside layers were made of brand-new plastic; only the inner layer was made of recycled plastic. Hellmann's is only one of Unilever's brands. The company is moving toward ensuring "that 100% of plastic packaging will be designed to be fully reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025..." *Caren Snook for the Green Dream Team*



Earth Care Everyday!

Actions you can take now:

1. Get your soil & water Tested for lead.
2. Learn about public transit and advocate for better access – air pollution leads to respiratory conditions such as asthma. Advocate for better public transit in your municipality. Also do your part to try to bike, walk, or carpool.
3. Visit The Native Land App to learn about the indigenous people from the land you occupy!

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 March, Covenant volunteers distributed food to 898 food insecure neighbors which included 204 children and 98 senior adults. Thank you volunteers and everyone who contributed to this ongoing ministry!